

Participation of Management Study Program Students in International Scientific Conferences: Perspectives and Experience

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ABSTRACT

Participation in international scientific conferences is often considered a valuable opportunity for students pursuing higher education, particularly in fields such as management. However, the extent to which Management Study Program students engage in such conferences and the impact of this participation on their academic and personal growth remain relatively underexplored areas of research. The research aims to provide insights into the participation of Management Study Program students in international scientific conferences, shedding light on their motivations, experiences, and the outcomes of such involvement. The descriptive qualitative method is used to analyze the findings in the form of questionnaires given to 15 students of the management study program, Institut Bisnis dan Informatika Kwik Kian Gie who have attended the International Conference event. The general view of the students was that attending international conferences was considered beneficial for improving English language skills, organization, as well as socialization and understanding of diverse cultures although individual experiences and perspectives varied. Positive view towards participation in international conferences and see it as a valuable opportunity to improve their English language skills and their personal and professional development. It is expected that through this research, there will be more in-depth and extended research to investigate participants' experiences in participating in international conferences

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1. INTRODUCTION

Participation in international scientific conferences allows students to expand their knowledge in their field of study. They can attend presentations from leading experts in a particular discipline, learn about the latest trends, and deepen their understanding of relevant topics. As participants, students also have the opportunity to present their research or projects before diverse audiences. This helps them acquire effective communication skills, boost their self-confidence, and learn to explain complex ideas to others. Through international scientific conferences attended by

participants from various countries, English language skills are honed and put to good use. It is a platform to showcase English language skills in a structured manner and make English a medium of communication.

Presenting in English allows researchers to communicate with audiences from different countries and cultural backgrounds. This provides an opportunity to share knowledge with the wider global scientific community and make a greater impact on participants' research. Thus, English becomes a powerful tool to disseminate and contribute to scientific knowledge globally (Rifiyanti & Hardianti, 2023). Presentations in English can give research greater international recognition. International scientific conferences often attract participants from different countries, and using English allows participants to interact with a multicultural audience.

The International Conference is one of the activities that students can choose as a medium to broaden their horizons. The International Conference will bring together many participants from around the world to exchange useful information. (UNAIR FISIP, 2020). By taking part in an International Conference, students can utilise this valuable opportunity to perform their skills, expand their knowledge, and make valuable connections within and beyond the academic environment.

Interaction with participants from different cultures opens minds and helps students understand global diversity. These are valuable lessons that apply not only in an academic context, but also in everyday life (*Prosiding Konferensi Internasional Hubungan Indonesia Malaysia Ke-8*, n.d.) In the context of an international conference, valuing cultural diversity can include respecting language and communication differences between participants from different countries, understanding different social norms and ways of interacting in different cultures, recognising the uniqueness and richness of traditions, arts, and values of different cultural groups, and participants opening up to each other to learn from different perspectives and share experiences to deepen understanding of the diversity of the world.

Effective communication skills, especially using English, are very important in participating in international conferences. In general, effective communication is communication that is able to convey ideas or meanings with the same value between the giver and receiver of the message. Effective communication is very important for the teaching and learning process because the audience has a diversity of cultures, backgrounds and perspectives of differences and vulnerable self-stability that will determine the success of communication itself (Riwayatningsih et al., 2021). Considering the benefits of being able to communicate in English is that foreign language skills can support a career in public relations and organisation in foreign languages can establish good relationships with various communities, customers from various companies or organisations (Yani, 2018). An important piece of knowledge in performing effective public communication is the knowledge to determine which course of action is appropriate for the goal to be achieved. appropriate for the goal to be achieved in communication, such as building relationships and further social interaction. With this knowledge means communicators have the ability to determine the appropriate communication behaviour (Mucharam, 2022). Public Speaking is simply speaking in front of a public audience, not just talking, but is required to have fluency in speaking, selection of choice of words, the use of intonation and the right tone as well as emotional control to can control the atmosphere (Husain, 2021). All aspects mentioned above need to be a concern for conference participants in the national and international scope, especially events that are entirely in English, there are more competencies that must be prepared, especially language skills.

In the assessment of speaking proficiency there are 5 aspects of assessment a person is seen from memorisation, fluency, comprehension, grammaticality and diction, while the content can be seen in the completeness, conciseness, and cohesion of the content of the conversation (Mufidah, 2017). Understanding proper English grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure is an important foundation. These skills ensure that the message you want to convey can be clearly understood by the audience (Rifiyanti, 2023). Another thing to note is proper emphasis on important words to highlight important points in the presentation. Varying intonation helps to maintain the audience's interest (Rifiyanti, 2018).

Based on the coverage above, this study aims to understand what encourages management study programme students to participate in international scientific conferences, what experiences are

gained in participating in international conferences, and what challenges students face when participating in international conferences, The objectives of this study also included contributing to academic knowledge on the benefits of student participation in international scientific conferences, and how this experience can be enhanced. And through such activities it can enhance the experience of students in management study programmes through a better understanding of the benefits and challenges of participation in international scientific conferences. Through data findings from the results of questionnaires given to all students who have participated in international conferences can be used to draw conclusions about the impact of participation in international conferences on management study programme students and its implications for improving educational programmes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher education in management is increasingly emphasising the importance of international experience in preparing students for successful careers in the global era. One way to achieve this international experience is through participation in international conferences related to the field of management studies. However, while international conferences can provide various benefits, there is still a need to further understand the perspectives and experiences of students participating in such conferences.

2.1. Benefits of Student Participation in International Conferences

International Scientific conferences are not just about presenting research findings, but also about obtaining feedback, building networks, and bridging the gap between research and wider understanding in the scientific community and society. This makes scientific conferences an important element in the research and knowledge dissemination environment (Klemeš, 2016). Scientific conferences are key platforms where researchers can present their latest findings and research to a comparable audience in their field. It is an opportunity to share new discoveries, innovative ideas, and the latest developments in various fields of science. During the conference, students have the opportunity to receive feedback from fellow researchers, Q&A sessions, and group discussions. This feedback helps to refine and develop the research further. This is an important process in the scientific method to ensure the quality and validity of research. Through scientific conferences students can network with fellow researchers, scholars, and professionals in the same or related fields. These relationships can lead to future collaborations, exchange of ideas, and access to greater resources.

Having the opportunity to present research requires students to develop public speaking skills. They must understand how to convey their research findings clearly and convincingly to a critical audience. This helps improve communication skills, critical thinking ability, and problem-solving ability (Kneale et al., 2016). Presenting research at academic conferences is not only a way to share findings, but also a valuable opportunity for students' learning and self-development in the context of research and communication skills, particularly in English.

2.2. Perspectives on Student Participation in International Conferences

Conference attendees may face challenges in allocating enough time to interact with many people in a limited amount of time during the conference. Conferences often have a busy schedule with presentations and other events, so participants may find it difficult to chat or get to know other participants. Likewise, in international conferences, participants often come from different language and cultural backgrounds. Language challenges or intercultural understanding can make communication difficult, thus making networking difficult (Hill & Walkington, 2016). The view of

some students that through participation in conferences, social competence, networking and communication are important aspects of being a scientist is a very relevant and accurate view. It reflects a deep understanding of the important role that social competence, networking and communication skills play in a scientific career and research (Holen et al., 2021).

3. METHOD

Descriptive qualitative method is used to analyse the findings in the form of questionnaires given to 15 students of the management study program, Institut Bisnis dan Informatika Kwik Kian Gie who have attended the International Conference event. The collected questionnaires were then subjected to qualitative data analysis. This involved coding, categorising and thematizing the students' answers to identify patterns, themes and key concepts in their responses. Conclusions were then drawn based on the qualitative analysis and interpretation of the findings.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through open-ended and closed-ended questions, questions were asked to explore students' perceptions of participating in international conferences and their experiences

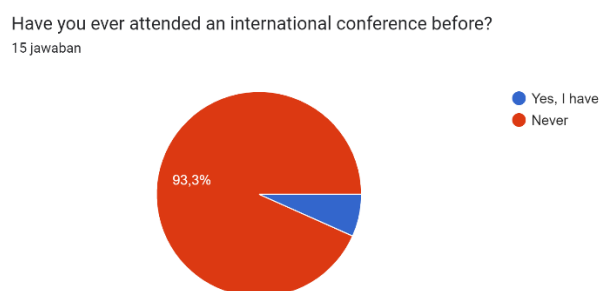


Figure 1. respondents' previous experience with international conferences.

The questionnaire responses above indicate that most of the respondents in the research sample have previous experience attending international conferences.

The response to the second question with the question What is your motivation for attending international conferences? The conclusion from the responses is that the motivation for attending international conferences varies greatly. Some have strong reasons for engaging in such events. Some of them want to gain additional experience, while others have a passion for learning and acquiring new knowledge. There are also those who see this opportunity as a way to gain valuable experience before graduating from their education. Not only that, international conferences are also seen as a platform to share research results with a wider audience, especially with native speakers from different countries. They seek valuable feedback and criticism from their international peers. Some see participation in these conferences as an opportunity to increase their own self-worth, while others see it as the first step in overcoming their comfort zone. Some respondents revealed that the international conference was also their first opportunity to be involved in such an international-level event, and this was their main motivation. Others want to hear different perspectives, learn new ideas, and keep up with the latest trends in various fields through interaction with other participants. Not to forget, some participants also look for opportunities to publish their research in international journals, which is an added boost for them. And naturally, there are those who attend international conferences to expand their knowledge, learn new things, and continuously improve themselves. In many ways, international conferences are a rich platform for meeting different motivations and goals, all of which contribute to the enrichment of participants' personal and professional experiences.

The third question was What are your expectations from attending international conferences? The responses from the respondents were that with diverse expectations, students who attend international conferences are looking for a variety of things, including improved skills, experience, new knowledge, and opportunities for constructive feedback. International conferences can be a rich platform to achieve these goals and further enhance participants' personal and professional experiences.

The answers to the question What benefits do you expect to gain from attending international conferences? From the various answers that have been given, there are various benefits that participants expect to gain from participating in international conferences. The following is a summary of these expected benefits. Gaining new experiences, gaining feedback to improve their research journals, increase knowledge and experience and get the opportunity to participate in similar conferences in the future, gaining feedback that can improve the quality of their journal writing, improve communication and speaking skills, especially in English, and to improve English language skills and confidence in speaking.

The results of the question on the importance of attending international conferences are as follows:

How important is attending international conferences for your academic/professional development? 1 - Not at all important 2 - Slightly important 3 - Moderately important 4 - Very important 5 - Extremely important
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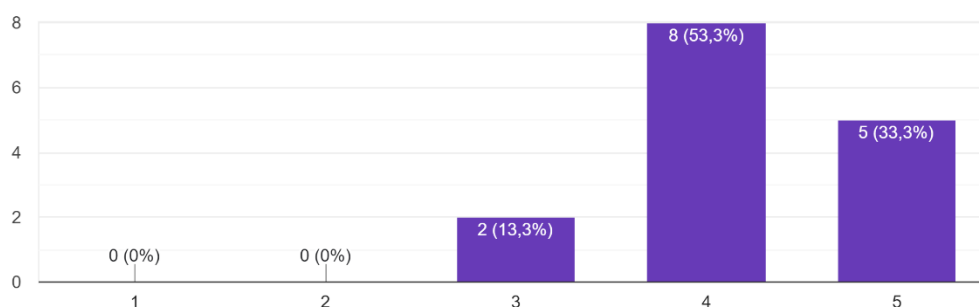


Figure 2. The importance of attending international conference

The distribution of responses indicating that most of the surveyed groups felt that attending international conferences was "very important" or "quite important" to their academic and professional development was generally positive. In summary, the survey results indicate that, within the group surveyed, attending international conferences is widely seen as valuable for academic and professional development. The different levels of importance given by respondents highlight the diversity of perspectives within the group, while the absence of low importance ratings underscores the overall recognition of the benefits of these conferences.

The next question addresses What are the barriers that prevent you from attending international conferences? From the responses given, here is a summary of the barriers that prevent people from attending international conferences: Some respondents felt that there were no barriers preventing them from attending international conferences. Some people may feel afraid that they will not be able to speak and explain well at an international conference. Some people face language-related obstacles, whether it is related to understanding the content of the journal presented or lacking confidence in speaking in English. Short preparation: Some respondents faced barriers due to short or limited preparation before the conference. Next were difficulties in communication, which could include problems in speaking or understanding English. English-related barriers also emerged in some responses, with some considering that their English language skills were not good enough to attend international conferences. And there is a lack of confidence regarding research and public speaking skills: Some respondents felt a lack of confidence regarding their research and public speaking skills.

In summarising the various statements regarding barriers to attending international conferences, it can be concluded that the experiences and views of each individual vary greatly. Some respondents felt that there were no barriers preventing them from participating in international conferences, indicating their level of preparedness and confidence in facing such challenges. However, there were also a number of barriers identified. Some people experienced fear that they would not be able to speak and explain well at an international conference, especially in the context of speaking in English. English, therefore, emerged as one of the main barriers that could hinder participation in international conferences. Some respondents also faced barriers related to short preparation before the conference, which could affect the quality of their presentations. In addition, there were barriers related to general communication skills, including problems in speaking or understanding English. Some respondents also felt that their level of English was insufficient to attend an international conference. In addition to language factors, some respondents also experienced barriers in terms of self-confidence related to their research and public speaking skills. This suggests that psychological aspects can also play an important role in barriers to participation in international conferences. With a better understanding of these barriers, steps can be taken to overcome them, including improving English language skills, providing support for better preparation, and providing training to increase confidence in public speaking. Thus, students can be better prepared and confident to attend international conferences and benefit from the experience.

Would you recommend attending international conferences to your peers and colleagues?

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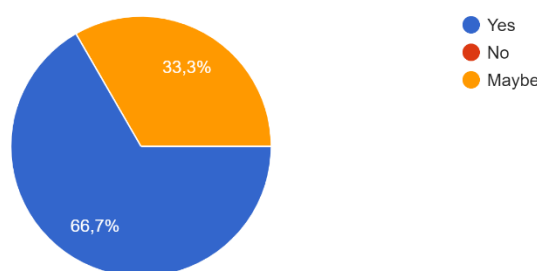


Figure 3. to recommend peers and colleagues in attending international conferences

Most survey participants (66.7%) would recommend attending an international conference to their peers and colleagues. They likely see the value of such conferences and believe that these conferences can be beneficial for personal and professional development. Meanwhile, the "maybe" responses indicate that some respondents may have doubts or different levels of uncertainty when recommending international conferences. These individuals may recognise the potential benefits of attending such conferences, but they may also consider factors such as individual circumstances or preferences that may influence their recommendations.

Overall, the majority of respondents in favour of recommending international conferences is a positive indicator of the perceived value and impact of such conferences on academic or professional growth. The "maybe" response indicates that there are nuances and considerations when providing recommendations, and individuals may need to assess the relevance of international conferences on a case-by-case basis.

How proficient do you feel in English language to attend international conferences?
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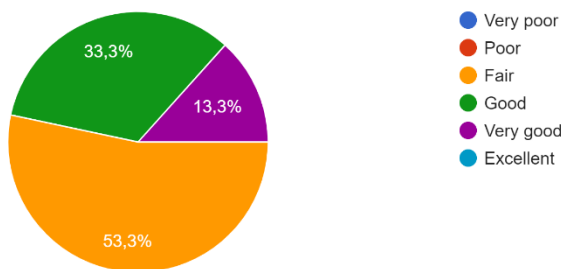


Figure 4. how proficient their English language to attend international conference

The conclusions that can be drawn from this distribution are as follows: the majority of respondents feel moderately proficient: more than half (53.3%) of the respondents felt that their level of English proficiency was "sufficient" to attend international conferences. This suggests that most respondents have a sufficient level of proficiency to communicate and participate in international events, although there may still be room for improvement. Meanwhile, some of them feel good or very good: About 46.6% (a combination of "good" and "very good") of the respondents have a relatively high level of confidence in speaking English to attend international conferences. This is a positive indicator showing that most of them feel capable of communicating effectively in a conference environment where English is the primary language.

Diversity of Proficiency Levels: Although the majority of respondents felt moderately proficient or above in English, there was diversity in the level of English proficiency among them. This reflects that some people may feel more confident in speaking and writing in English than others, and this may affect the extent to which they are able to attend and participate in international conferences. Overall, this survey shows that most respondents have a sufficient level of English proficiency to attend international conferences. However, levels of confidence in English vary, and efforts can be made to support individuals who may feel less confident to improve their English proficiency before attending international conferences.

Do you think attending international conferences helps to improve your English language proficiency?
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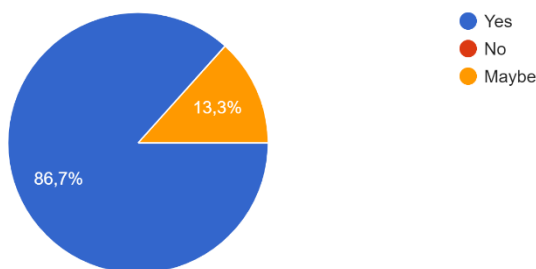


Figure 5. Attending international conferences can improve your English proficiency or no

The majority of respondents expressed positive opinions (86.7%) regarding the significant positive impact of attending international conferences on English language skills. This indicates a widespread belief among the individuals surveyed that attending international conferences is an effective way to improve their language skills. The "maybe" answers from a minority of respondents

may reflect uncertainty or a recognition that the degree of language improvement may vary depending on individual effort and the specific context of the conference.

On the whole, the results of this survey indicate a general consensus that attending international conferences is considered beneficial for improving English language skills, although individual experiences and perspectives varied.

4. CONCLUSION

The majority of respondents in the various questions expressed a high level of interest in participation in international conferences. They see it as a very valuable opportunity for personal and professional growth. Most importantly, the participants from the management study programme of Institut Bisnis dan Informatika Kwik Kian Gie feel confident enough in their English language skills to attend international conferences. This shows that management students feel that they have a sufficient foundation of English to participate in such conferences.

These international conferences as an effective way to improve their English language skills. This reflects the perception that experience in speaking, writing and interacting in English in a conference environment helps to improve their English language skills. Some of the barriers identified in the survey included concerns about public speaking ability, English language barriers, and short preparation before the conference. This suggests that while most respondents see great benefits in participating in international conferences, there is also an awareness of some of the challenges that may be faced.

In summary, this study can conclude that management study programme students have a positive view towards participation in international conferences and see it as a valuable opportunity to improve their English language skills and their personal and professional development. It is expected that through this research, there will be more in-depth and extended research to investigate participants' experiences in participating in international conferences. This includes preparation beforehand, experiences during the conference, and benefits gained afterwards. With in-depth interviews or multilevel surveys, so that future research can provide a richer understanding of participants' experiences.

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