Information Management and Business Review (ISSN 2220-3796)
Vol. 17, No. 1(S), pp. 262-271, March 2025

# Bridging Cultures: Student and Lecturer Perspectives on Visiting Academics

*Nor Aishah Mohd Ali[1], Eka Fauzihardani[2], Nelvirita[2], Bayu Tri Cahya[3]
[1]Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malacca branch, Malaysia
[2]Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia
[3]Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus, Central Java, Indonesia
*aishah72@uitm.edu.my
Corresponding Author: Dr Nor Aishah Mohd Ali

**Abstract:** This study elicits the perspectives of university students and lecturers at the School of Accounting, Faculty of Economic and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), regarding a visiting lecturer from the Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. This is achieved by exploring their views on integrating international academic practices, their impact on student engagement, and potential collaborative opportunities in research and consultation. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining focus groups and surveys to capture the experiences and perceptions of students and lecturers regarding the visiting academics during their two-week visit—the research sample comprised university students and lecturers who interacted with the visiting lecturer during this period. The findings indicate that students displayed increased enthusiasm and participation in classes conducted by the visiting lecturer. Both students and lecturers appreciated the cultural exchange, acknowledging its role in enriching the learning environment with diverse perspectives. However, challenges such as language barriers and cultural adaptation were observed, though these were mitigated through support and effective communication. The study stresses the need for structured support systems and improved integration approaches to enhance the effectiveness of visiting lecturer programs. Limitations include the short duration of the visit and the sample size, which may affect the generalizability of findings. This research contributes to the discourse on international academic collaboration by providing insights into improving visiting lecturer programs. It highlights the importance of fostering international academic partnerships to improve educational quality and cross-cultural engagement.

**Keywords**: *Academic exchange, international collaboration, student engagement, cultural adaptation, visiting lecturer program*

## 1. Introduction

The academic mobility among worldwide academics has become quite popular, contributing to the development of international academic cooperation and the enrichment of diverse educational experiences. Academic mobility through visiting lecturer programs provides novel approaches to teaching, supports research partnerships, and provides students with wider academic experience. Such exchanges provide students with different perspectives on teaching and learning activities (pedagogy), lead to higher participation and academic achievement levels, and offer faculty members a way to collaborate on research and professional activities. However, while there are benefits such as the ones mentioned above, there are challenges that come with visiting lecturers, such as language difficulties, cultural differences, and differences in academic expectations.

This study was undertaken to understand the perceptions of students and lecturers at the School of Accounting, Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB), Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), Indonesia, on a visiting lecturer from the Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia, in the area of Auditing. UNP is one of the biggest public universities in Indonesia and one of the country's leading universities, famous for its academic excellence and international partnerships. The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) provides learning and development for future economists, business executives, and administrators. Thus, as a member of the international academic community, UNP plays an active role in the promotion of the international academic exchange program, which makes it a perfect case to study the effects of visiting lecturer programs. (FEB UNP, 2025). On the other hand, as there have been linkages between the two universities, it is just that an exchange of lecturers and students has taken place over the years. UiTM was selected due to its reputation as one of the leading universities in Malaysia, also known for its comprehensive educational programs and strong emphasis on international academic collaborations. This contributed to UiTM being an ideal representative institution to examine the impact of visiting lecturers.

Current research also shows that international teaching partnerships can improve the learning environment and increase student participation (Boulton et al., 2019). Nonetheless, there is a lack of understanding of the experiences of students and faculty in such programs, especially at the universities in Southeast Asia. Many studies that have been made on student engagement are general; however, very few studies have been conducted on how visiting lecturers affect student learning experiences, the recruitment of students, and collaborative academic activities at the institutional level in this specific regional context. Paying attention to the gap, this study aims to find out how a visiting lecturer program affects students' academic engagement, the possibilities and efficacy of teaching strategies used by international lecturers, and the possibilities for collaborative research and consulting between universities. The study uses a mixed-method approach whereby interviews and surveys were conducted on students and lecturers who were directly involved with the visiting lecturer during a two-week program.

While visiting lecturers may bring new teaching methods and expertise, they often face challenges such as language barriers, cultural differences, and differences in terms of institutional expectations. These challenges can impact their integration into the academic environment, which may affect student engagement and the overall success of the exchange program. Hence, this study aims to address the gap in understanding how visiting lecturers' programs can improve student engagement, the effectiveness of different pedagogical approaches, and the potential for fostering cross-institutional research collaborations. By identifying these factors, the study will provide valuable insights into enhancing visiting lecturers' programs, specifically in overcoming the challenges of cultural and pedagogical integration.

The findings provide implications for academic staff mobility and visiting lecturers' integration into the host institutions. Based on the findings of the study, the best practices can be identified to enhance student engagement, support visiting lecturers, and build international academic partnerships. Next, the relevant literature on international academic exchanges and student engagement is reviewed, and the research methodology, data collection, and analysis procedures are discussed. Later, the results of the study are presented, including the effects of the visiting lecturer program. Furthermore, the implications of these findings are discussed, which provide improvements. Finally, the study ends with suggestions for improving visiting lecturer programs and promoting academic collaboration on a global level.

## 2. Literature Review

Visiting lecturer programs have become an important part of higher education institutions, offering opportunities for academic mobility, fostering international collaborations, and enhancing the quality of education. These programs function as crucial instruments for enhancing curricula, promoting intercultural exchanges, and facilitating collaborative research among institutions (Fomenko et al., 2019; McDonald, 2014). Visiting lecturers bring in diverse teaching methods, experiences, and global perspectives, offering students and faculty the opportunity to engage with novel pedagogical approaches (Bobrytska et al., 2020 ; Limbong, Alberto, Tandibura, 2022). Despite the benefits, several challenges, such as cultural adaptation, language differences, and varying pedagogical approaches, hinder the smooth integration of visiting lecturers (Ngonyama-Ndou, 2020, Rybo-LoPresti & Rhein, 2021). This literature review delves into the contributions of visiting lecturers, the challenges, and their role in advancing student learning and academic development.

### Benefits of Visiting Lecturers

#### *Enhancing Student Engagement and Global Competencies*

The presence of visiting lecturers improves student engagement and global competencies by offering students exposure to varied educational systems, teaching practices, and cultural perspectives (Bobrytska et al., 2020). (Jacobs, 2010) Contended that visiting lecturers often function as bridges between disciplines, fostering interdisciplinary collaborations that enhance collective academic identities within institutions. These collaborations contribute to the development of creative teaching approaches and promote the sharing of best practices among faculty members, ultimately benefiting students (Hamzah et al, 2024). The tactical involvement of visiting lecturers in academic programs can also encourage international research partnerships that benefit both students and faculty members through shared academic resources, research grant funding, and collaboration on joint publications (Fomenko et al., 2019; Zou et al., 2019). On the other hand, Saran (2024) notes that visiting lecturers usually incorporate cooperative learning strategies that enhance students' writing

skills and their subject area understanding, especially in language teaching (Razali & Mohamad Nasri, 2023). Also, argue for the integration of new pedagogical strategies to address the present challenges in education and promote equity in learning. Technology also changes the way of teaching and learning.

**Challenges faced by Visiting lecturers**

***Cultural and Linguistic Barriers***

One of the main challenges encountered by visiting lecturers is cultural adaptation. Rybo-LoPresti & Rhein (2021) highlighted the difficulties lecturers face in their attempt to observe unfamiliar cultural norms and educational systems, which can impede their ability to effectively connect with students and faculty. One significant issue could be the language barrier, with the visiting lecturer struggling to communicate effectively in a non-native language, thus hindering their teaching effectiveness (Ngonyama-Ndou, 2020). To address this, Żammit (2021) recommends intercultural training for both lecturers and students as essential. Equipping lecturers with the relevant tools to adapt to new cultural environments will improve their teaching and assist in creating more inclusive learning environments (Żammit, 2021).

***Pedagogical Differences and Institutional Support***

Another challenge faced by the visiting lecturers is due to differences in pedagogical practices between their home institutions and the host institution (Sumarsono et al., 2021) Argued that visiting lecturers who lack familiarity with the way local teaching techniques work may struggle to synchronize their approach with institutional expectations, leading to student disengagement. Accordingly, institutions need to provide the necessary support and orientation to visiting lecturers in assisting them to integrate their teaching methods effectively into the local educational setting (Ngonyama-Ndou, 2020). Furthermore, offering guidance on institutional norms and student expectations will assist visiting lecturers in avoiding pedagogical clashes and foster a more supportive learning environment for both students and faculty members (Rybo-LoPresti & Rhein, 2021).

**Role of Visiting Lecturers in Academic Collaboration and Research**

***Fostering Interdisciplinary Research***

Visiting lecturers play an important role in promoting interdisciplinary research by aiding collaboration across various academic fraternities. Fomenko et al. (2019) highlighted that visiting lecturers assist in liaising with faculty members from different fields, leading to the exchange of knowledge and ideas that enrich academic research. Zou et al. (2019) opinionated that research perspective diversification brought by the visiting lecturers improves the quality of collaborative projects, resulting in joint research publications and international research partnerships. Such collaborations are valuable for delivering global challenges that require a multidisciplinary approach (Zou et al. 2019). By adopting these research partnerships, visiting lecturers contribute to the internationalization of academic institutions and boost the global recognition of the host institutions.

***Promoting Research Culture***

The visiting lecturers are also influential in promoting a research culture among students by exposing them to new research methods and encouraging them to engage in academic activities. Aryanti & Wijaya (2022) found that students exposed to the visiting lecturers were more likely to be actively involved in research activities and develop a stronger understanding of academic research. By assisting and mentoring the students and engaging them in research projects, visiting lecturers assist students to gain valuable research skills that improve their academic experience and train them for future careers in research and academia (Hamzah et al., 2024).

**Impact of Program Duration on Cultural and Pedagogical Immersion**

The period of a visiting lecturer program plays a significant role in the depth of cultural and pedagogical immersion. Short-term programs offer limited opportunities for deep cultural exchange but still provide substantial benefits as the visiting lecturers are allowed to introduce the latest ideas and are able to engage with students in meaningful ways. A study by AR et al. (2023) revealed that even short-term exchange programs enhance participants' communication skills and adaptability. In contrast, longer-term exchanges allow visiting lecturers to participate entirely in the academic community and develop stronger relationships with students and faculty members (Bretag & van der Veen, 2017; Spencer-Oatey, Helen; Dauber, 2017). Longer-term

exchanges undoubtedly provide deeper cultural immersion and enable lecturers to have a deeper impact on the academic culture of the host higher learning institution.

**Qualitative Research in an Educational Setting**

Qualitative research design is vital for exploring the nuanced experiences of participants in educational settings like visiting lecturer programs. It provides valuable insights into how such programs impact both students and lecturers, assisting in uncovering challenges and opportunities (Maxwell, 2012). Approaches like thematic analysis, as shown by (McDonald, 2014) facilitate to identification of key patterns and themes from interviews or focus groups, offering an in-depth understanding of the dynamics involved. Additionally, content analysis can classify perceptions and highlight significant themes, contributing to a valuable analysis. (Limbong et al., 2022, Rajak & Ismail, 2024).

Visiting lecturer programs have a profound impact on student engagement, curriculum development, and academic research. While these programs offer many benefits, including enhancing global competencies and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations, they also present several challenges, such as cultural adaptation and pedagogical differences. Through a mixed-method research method, this study aims to explore the experiences of both students and lecturers involved in visiting lecturer programs, offering insights into how these programs can be optimized for greater effectiveness. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the role of visiting lecturers in higher learning institutions and provide suggestions for empowering the implementation of these programs.

## 3. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-method approach, with a primary emphasis on qualitative data collection to explore the experiences, perceptions, and recommendations of undergraduate accounting students and lecturers at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP). Given the study's goal of gaining in-depth insights into the impact of the visiting lecturer program, qualitative methods are well-suited to capture the complexity and depth of participants' perspectives.

A structured questionnaire was administered to students to provide an overview of their demographic information, engagement level, and overall perceptions of the visiting lecturer program. The quantitative component is designed to offer a broad understanding of the trends and patterns within the student population, using descriptive statistical tools to summarize the data. This allows for an initial overview of students' experiences, but the primary focus is on qualitative data, which provides richer insights into the nuances of these experiences. The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to analyze the data due to the ordinal nature of the survey responses, allowing for a non-parametric comparison of respondents' perceptions across different survey items, which did not indicate a specific distribution of data.

In addition to the questionnaire, focus group interviews were conducted separately with both students and lecturers to gain a deeper insight into their experiences and perspectives on the visiting lecturer program. These focus groups allow participants to discuss challenges, benefits, and the overall impact of the program on teaching and learning. The open-ended nature of the interview questions encourages participants to express their views in greater detail, making the qualitative approach particularly worthy for this study.

Given the small sample size (33 participants), qualitative methods are considered ideal for exploring the subtleties of individual experiences and ensuring that the perspectives of both students and lecturers are thoroughly recognized. Thematic analysis is applied to the qualitative data to identify recurring themes, patterns, and key insights, providing a comprehensive understanding of how the visiting lecturer program is perceived and its effect on academic engagement and learning outcomes. The integration of quantitative data complements the qualitative findings, offering an overview of trends, while the in-depth qualitative analysis provides contextual understanding, ensuring a thorough exploration of the participants' views and experiences.

## 4. Findings

A total of 33 students have responded to the online questionnaire. Demographically, most of the students who responded are female (33, 87.9%), aged 20-25 years old from the School of Accounting, Faculty of Economics and Business, UNP. The following table summarizes the students' responses to the Likert scale questions. The summary of the response is depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2: Summary of responses on the student's experience with the visiting lecturer**

| Items | Strongly disagree (total, %) | Disagree (total, %) | Neutral (total, %) | Agree (total, %) | Strongly Agree (total, %) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel comfortable with a visiting lecturer. | 1 (3%) | 0 | 1 (3%) | 7 (21.2%) | 24 (72.7%) |
| The visiting lecturer's teaching style is easy to understand | 0 | 0 | 2 (6.1%) | 12 (36.4%) | 19 (57.6%) |
| Having a visiting lecturer enhances my learning experience. | 1 (3%) | 0 | 1 (3%) | 9 (27.3%) | 22 (66.7%) |
| I feel more engaged in class when taught by a visiting lecturer. | 0 | 0 | 8 (24.3%) | 19 (57.6%) | 6 (18.2%) |
| The visiting lecturer provides valuable insights that local lecturers may not offer. | 1 (3%) | 0 | 6 (18.2%) | 9 (27.3%) | 17 (51.5%) |
| I believe that the cultural diversity brought by a visiting lecturer enriches the learning environment. | 1 (3%) | 0 | 4 (12.1%) | 6 (18.2%) | 22 (66.7%) |
| I am more motivated to participate in class discussions with a visiting lecturer. | 1 (3%) | 0 | 4 (12.1%) | 10 (30.3%) | 8 (24.3%) |

**Statistical Analysis of Respondents' Perception**

To test the differences in respondents' perceptions of various items of the data, such as comfort, teaching style, learning enhancement, engagement, and the value of insights, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted. This non-parametric test was chosen due to the ordinal nature of the survey data, which involves Likert scale responses. The test results found no significant differences in perceptions across the different items tested, as all p-values exceeded the 0.05 threshold ($p \approx 0.406$). This implied that the respondents generally held consistent views regarding the positive influence of visiting lecturers on their learning experience, without substantial variation in how they perceived the different aspects.

**Perceptions of Visiting Lecturer: A Detailed Breakdown**

The survey results help to capture students' views on visiting lecturers concerning their comfort, attitude, interest, and the influence of visiting lecturers on their learning process. Most students (72.7%) strongly agreed that they are comfortable with a visiting lecturer, whilst 21.2% of students also agreed with the statement. Only 3% of students had neutral phrasing, and 3% of students disagreed with the statement, which means that most of the students have positive perceptions of visiting lecturers in terms of comfort. In the same manner, the ability of the visiting lecturers was also considered to be very understandable; 57.6% of the students have a strong agreement and 36.4% have an agreement. Only 6.1% of the students had neutral phrasing, and none of the students opted for the disagreement option.

In the third question that asked whether the presence of a visiting lecturer enhances your learning experience, 66.7% of the students have a strong agreement and 27.3% of the students have an agreement. This shows the perceived educational benefits of visiting lecturers, while 3% strongly disagreed, and 3% remained neutral. The level of class participation also showed positive results because 57.6% of the students responded that they are more engaged in class when taught by a visiting lecturer while 18.2% responded strongly agree. However, there were more students (24.3%) who gave the response in the middle ground, which means that some students do not have a very distinct change in their level of engagement.

In the fourth question, the specific contributions that visiting lecturers may provide were asked, and 51.5% of the students agreed that these lecturers provide unique views that are lacking with local lecturers, and 27.3% of the students have an agreement. However, 18.2% of the students were somehow confused, and 3% of the students strongly disagreed with the statement, which means that most students believe that the extra value is useful, but some do not think that there is much of a difference. The cultural experience of visiting lecturers was seen as a benefit to the learning process, as 66.7% of the students surveyed have a strong agreement that it is beneficial to the learning process and 18.2% of them have an agreement. However, 12.1% of the students were neutral, and 3% of them disagreed strongly, meaning that although most of the students understood the advantages of cultural diversity, a few of them were not convinced. Last, the student's willingness to participate in class discussions with a visiting lecturer was investigated. Although 30.3% of the students agreed and 24.3% of them strongly agreed that they are encouraged to participate, 12.1% of them were in the middle ground and 3% of them disagreed strongly. This means that while most of the students feel that they are encouraged to participate, some may not necessarily have a higher level of motivation.

In general, the outcomes of the study reveal that students have mostly favorable opinions of visiting lecturers, particularly regarding comfort, clarity of exposition, and the value added to the learning process. However, some aspects, including participation and engagement in class, have a slightly higher rate of neutrality, which indicates that not all students are affected by the presence of a visiting lecturer.

**Other responses from the questionnaire**

Students were asked about their overall experience with the visiting lecturer. Many highlighted the engaging teaching style, the lecturer's ability to simplify complex topics, and the value of gaining exposure to different educational perspectives. Three commonly shared responses include:

"*Visiting lecturers often bring unique experiences and perspectives from different institutions. This diversity enriches students' learning experiences by exposing them to various auditing practices and methodologies."*

*"It was enjoyable because the teaching style was engaging. Additionally, having a visiting lecturer from Malaysia broadened my knowledge, particularly about their education system and the ACCA certification for professional accountants."*

*"The way the lecturer taught the auditing subject was easy to understand. The language used was simple."*

Students were also asked about any challenges they faced while being taught by a visiting lecturer. The most common difficulties revolved around communication barriers, differences in teaching styles, and language accents. The three most frequently mentioned responses were:

*"Sometimes, there is a lack of communication between the visiting lecturer and students regarding the course objectives and teaching approach. This can lead to misunderstandings in information delivery."*

*"Differences in teaching styles, language barriers, and limited time."*

*"The challenge I face when studying is related to the language accent used, so sometimes it is difficult for me to understand what the lecturer is saying.*"

To assess the motivational impact of visiting lecturers, students were asked whether their presence inspired them academically. The responses indicate that many students found the experience enriching and felt encouraged to pursue further studies. The three most common responses were:

*"It was very motivating because my knowledge expanded."*

*"The visiting lecturer encouraged interaction in class, which made me more motivated."*

*"I became motivated to be able to continue my education abroad."*

Students were asked whether they believed the visiting lecturer had a positive impact on their academic and personal development. Many recognized the value of gaining insights from international lecturers and broadening their perspectives. The three most frequently shared responses were:

*"Yes, because the visiting lecturer provided new insights into Malaysia's education system."*

*"Yes, because it enhances students' experiences by allowing them to learn from lecturers from Malaysia."*

*"The presence of a visiting lecturer can significantly contribute to both academic and personal growth. Academically, they bring diverse perspectives and expertise, which can deepen understanding of the subject matter and expose students to new ideas and practices."*

Students had a positive experience with the visiting lecturer, appreciating the engaging teaching style, simplified explanations, and exposure to different educational perspectives. However, some challenges were noted, particularly in communication, differences in teaching styles, and language barriers, which occasionally

made understanding difficult. Despite these challenges, most students felt motivated by the visiting lecturer, believing that their presence contributed to both academic and personal growth by broadening their knowledge and inspiring them to pursue further studies.

**Responses from the focus group discussion**

To gather in-depth insights, a focus group discussion was conducted with both students and lecturers. Below are their respective responses.

**Lecturer**

Lecturers responded positively to the experience of having a visiting lecturer in their institution, highlighting the valuable insights they gained. Many appreciated learning about new topics, especially in specialized areas such as Shariah auditing and the use of AI in research writing. The exchange of ideas was seen as beneficial, particularly in understanding different approaches to auditing and financial reporting. Lecturers found the discussions enriching, as they provided fresh perspectives on their existing curriculum. One lecturer remarked,

*"I never realized how extensive Shariah auditing principles are. It has given me a new perspective on how Islamic finance operates beyond what we typically discuss in class."*

The session allowed faculty members to explore concepts that they had not previously engaged in detail. Additionally, lecturers were intrigued by the demonstration of AI tools in research writing, seeing it as an innovative way to support academic work. Many had previously been unfamiliar with how AI could be effectively used in the research process, particularly in structuring academic papers and improving writing quality. One lecturer shared,

*"I was initially skeptical about AI in research writing, but after seeing how it can assist in organizing and refining our work, I think it can be a very useful tool."*

Another lecturer commented on the impact of these discussions, saying,

*"This session made me realize how AI could help us in academia, not just for students but for lecturers as well, in streamlining our research process."*

The exposure to these tools was seen as a revelation, leading some to consider how AI could be integrated into their research methodology. Overall, the visiting lecturer was well received, with faculty members appreciating the exchange of knowledge and looking forward to future collaborations. The experience not only provided new learning opportunities for students but also contributed to the professional development of lecturers at the institution.

**Undergraduate students**

During the interview, students shared their experiences and impressions of having a visiting lecturer in their class. Most students were excited about the opportunity, seeing it as a new and valuable learning experience. One student expressed enthusiasm by saying,

*"I think this is good because you share so many things about your campus with us, and it makes me feel like, oh, sometimes I want to continue my education abroad too."*

However, not all students had prior notice about the visiting lecturer's arrival, and some were surprised. Another student mentioned,

*"At first, we didn't know, and there was no prior information about your arrival. It was quite sudden."*

Despite the initial uncertainty, students welcomed the experience and were eager to learn. Students also discussed their understanding of auditing as a subject and how the visiting lecturer's teaching style differed from their usual lecturers. They acknowledged that auditing is a critical skill for accounting students, with one explaining,

*"Auditing is a fundamental skill that accounting graduates must have. Many auditors are trained to think critically with integrity and honesty."*

Some students compared their experience learning from their usual lecturer to the visiting lecturer, noting differences in delivery style. One student said,

*"Our lecturers tend to speak slowly, which helps us understand better. But when you speak, it is a bit faster, so we need to focus fully."*

This highlights how adjusting to a different teaching style required more concentration from students but also offered them an opportunity to improve their listening and comprehension skills. Another key discussion point was the language barrier, particularly regarding accents and pronunciation. While students were able to understand the lecturer, they noted differences in how English was spoken compared to their usual lecturers. One student mentioned,

*"The challenge I face when studying is related to the language accent used, so sometimes it is difficult for me to understand what the lecturer is saying."*

However, despite these challenges, students appreciated the exposure to different accents and teaching approaches, which broadened their learning experience. They also expressed motivation to further their studies and explore international opportunities. One student summed it up well by saying,

*"I feel motivated a little bit. I want to go to UiTM someday."*

The session with the visiting lecturer encouraged students to think beyond their usual academic setting and consider international learning opportunities. Overall, the responses received positive feedback from the focus group on the visiting lecturer. They appreciated the engaging teaching style, the ability to simplify complex topics, and the opportunity to gain exposure to different educational perspectives. However, some challenges were highlighted, particularly in terms of communication barriers, differences in teaching approaches, and language accents, which at times made comprehension difficult. Despite these obstacles, most students found the experience highly motivating. They believed that the presence of a visiting lecturer significantly contributed to both their academic and personal growth by expanding their knowledge and inspiring them to consider further studies.

**Discussion**

The analysis of survey responses and focus group interviews reveals three key themes: (1) academic enrichment and student engagement, (2) challenges in adaptation and institutional support, and (3) contributions to research and collaboration. These themes provide a structured understanding of students' and lecturers' experiences with visiting lecturers.

**Academic Enrichment and Student Engagement**

The findings indicate that visiting lecturers are important in improving students' experiences in class by providing diverse perspectives, generating cultural change, and offering active styles of teaching. This positive perception of the students on their engagement and exposure to global perspectives sustains the assertion made by Bobrytska et al. (2020) that visiting lecturers can come in and change the curricula as well as the worldview of the students. The interdisciplinary nature of their teaching, which was mentioned in most of the focus group interviews, agrees with the findings of Saran (2024) and Razali & Mohamad Nasri (2023), who pointed out that collaborative learning enhances students' engagement. However, while students appreciated these advantages, some of them had problems with the change in teaching styles and accents, which was also a problem identified by Ngonyama-Ndou (2020) and Rybo-LoPresti & Rhein (2021) concerning expatriate academics who have linguistic and cultural challenges.

**Challenges in Adaptation and Institutional Support**

Despite the benefits, students and lecturers reported some difficulties in incorporating visiting lecturers into the current academic context. Language issues and differences in pedagogical approaches were among the main problems. This view agrees with the study by A.R. et al. (2023) and Spencer-Oatey & Dauber (2017), who pointed out that short-term academic exchanges are useful but do not always involve sufficient cultural contact. Moreover, the lecturers also highlighted the importance of well-defined orientation programs, another view that is supported by Żammit (2021), who reasoned that institutions play a crucial role in the knowledge exchange process. To address these problems, the participants recommended the participants for intercultural training and mentorship programs, a position which is supported by Bretag & Van Der Veen (2017) in making the most out of the academic exchange.

**Contributions to Research and Collaboration**

It is not only in teaching that visiting lecturers are important, but they are equally important in academic collaboration and research development. Previous literature shows that visiting lecturers assist in creating

interdisciplinary research partnerships (Fomenko et al., 2019; Zou et al., 2019). This was evidenced by the feedback from the lecturers who remarked that they learned about new and specific areas of interest, such as Shariah auditing and AI in research writing, shared by the visiting lecturer. These findings conform with Aryanti & Wijaya (2022), who opined that visiting lecturers play a significant role in developing a research culture at the institution. Even though differences in academic expectations posed some problems at the beginning, the overall impact on the development of research partnerships and cross-disciplinary collaboration was seen as beneficial.

From the thematic analysis, visiting lecturers are beneficial for student engagement, research collaboration, and global interaction, but difficulties such as language issues and pedagogical styles need institutional support. Solutions like well-defined orientation, cultural training, and feedback mechanisms are crucial to improving the effectiveness of visiting lecturers. Thus, the challenges can be met and overcome, and universities can contribute to the development of a more diverse and globally oriented learning environment.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be concluded that visiting lecturer programs are important in improving student learning, sharing cultures, and developing international collaboration in research. The findings show that students learn better with multiple teaching strategies, making the learning process more active and interesting. Likewise, lecturers learn new ways of teaching and potential research partners from the program, which supports the notion of academic exchange. Nevertheless, to enhance the implementation of these programs, some problems such as cultural adaptation, barriers, and language issues should be addressed. It is therefore important that visiting lecturers are given detailed orientation briefs to familiarize them with the local academic culture and norms. Moreover, the integration of home and host institutions may also be improved through continuous communication between them. This paper also suggests that soliciting feedback from students and faculty will be particularly useful in the improvement of the program and making such changes based on the experience. Other recommendations include providing language assistance and cultural information to the visiting lecturers and the students, as well as enhancing their adaptation. In this way, the aforementioned factors can be actively addressed, and visiting lecturer programs can be made to be most effective in creating a more inclusive and compassionate academic environment.

### Future Directions and Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights, it is limited by the short duration of the visiting lecturer program and the specific institutional context. Future research could explore the long-term impact of such programs on academic performance, professional development, and sustained international collaboration. Additionally, comparative studies across different universities and disciplines could provide broader perspectives on best practices for implementing and improving visiting lecturer programs.

The sample size of only 33 students is small, and future research could benefit from a larger sample size to increase generalizability. Additionally, inferential statistical tests such as t-tests or ANOVA could provide further insights into the statistical significance of the observed differences in student engagement and perceptions based on variables like gender or previous experience with visiting lecturers.

**Acknowledgment:** The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to the management of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), for their kind invitation and support throughout this teaching experience at UNP. Their warm hospitality and cooperation have contributed to a meaningful and enriching academic exchange. The researcher also extends heartfelt appreciation to the management of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) for granting consent and providing support to participate in this teaching engagement. Their encouragement and facilitation have enabled valuable contributions to and insights from this international academic collaboration.

**References**

AR, A. R. S., Zawani, H. N., Hasfalina, C. M., & ... (2023). Empowering Outbound Mobility Students towards Future Talents. *Gading Journal for*….https://gadingssuitm.com/index.php/gadingss/article/view/406%0Ahttps://gadingssuitm.com/index.php/gadingss/article/download/406/340

Aryanti, A., & Wijaya, T. T. (2022). Elementary Students' Attitudes towards an Online Visiting Lecture in the COVID-19 School Closure Period. *Journal of Teaching and Learning in Elementary Education (Jtlee)*, *5*(1), 81. https://doi.org/10.33578/jtlee.v5i1.7910

Bobrytska, V.I., Krasylnykova, H.V., Batechko,N.G., Baseda,N.A., Spitsyn, Y. S. (2020). Reshaping the University Curriculum through the Visiting Lectureship. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *19*(12), 70–85.

Boulton, C. A., Hughes, E., Kent, C., Smith, J. R., & Williams, H. T. P. (2019). Student engagement and well-being over time at a higher education institution. *PLoS ONE*, *14*(11), 1–20.

Bretag, T., & van der Veen, R. (2017). 'Pushing the boundaries': participant motivation and self-reported benefits of short-term international study tours. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *54*(3), 175–183. https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2015.1118397

FEB UNP. (2025). *Faculty of Economics and Business*. https://feb.unp.ac.id/

Fomenko, T., Bilotserkovets, M., & Kobzhev, A. (2019). Extrapolation of Canadian Universities' Internationalization Strategies into Ukrainian Higher Agrarian Education. *Revista Romaneasca Pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*, *11*(2), 110. https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/120

Hamzah, M.L., Nazaruddin, Saule, B., Perizat, P., Medet, I., Ainur, S. & Zhannar, B. (2024). Visiting Professor as Implementation of Cooperation Between Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau and Arkalyk Pedagogical Institute, Kazakhstan. *Community Engagement & Emergence Journal*, *5*(1), 9–18.

Jacobs, C. (2010). Transgressing disciplinary boundaries: Constructing alternate academic identities through collaboration with 'the other.' *African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, *14*(2), 110–120.

Limbong, S. & Alberto, Tandibura, F. (2022). Lecturer's Personal and Social Competence Toward Students' Writing Proficiency. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*, *16*(1), 1–23.

Maxwell, J. (2012). The importance of qualitative research for causal explanation in education. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *18*(7), 1–10.

McDonald, L. (2014). Visiting Lecturers: Perceptions of their Role in Supervising Student Teachers on Practicum. *Journal of Education and Training*, *1*(2), 210. https://doi.org/10.5296/jet.v1i2.5763

Ngonyama-Ndou, T. (2020). Cross-cultural adjustment experiences of academic expatriates in some South African universities: The case of KwaZulu-Natal. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *34*(4), 251–268. https://doi.org/10.20853/34-4-3547

Rajak, R. & Ismail, H. (2024). Rajak_2024_Student Perceptions of the Prospects of the Geography Education Study Program.pdf. *Journal of Social Knowledge Education (JSKE)*, *5*(2), 87–97.

Razali, N. F. & Mohamad Nasri, N. (2023). Innovative Teaching Methods – A Systematic Literature Review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, *12*(4), 1737–1752. https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v12-i4/18508

Rybo-LoPresti, B., & Rhein, D. (2021). A Qualitative Analysis of Academic and Cultural Adjustment: American Students in Thailand, What Can Be Done for Them? *SAGE Open*, *11*(1), 1–10.

Saran, A. A. (2024). Effect of teaching strategies on students' German writing skills at Saudi international schools. *Saudi Journal of Language Studies*, *4*(1), 47–68. https://doi.org/10.1108/sjls-10-2023-0049

Spencer-Oatey, H. & Dauber, D. (2017). The gains and pains of mixed-nationality group work at university. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *38*(3), 219–236.

Sumarsono, R. B., Gunawan, I., Kusumaningrum, D. E., Benty, D. D. N., & Bhayangkara, A. N. (2021). Influence of Lecturer's Pedagogic Competency Level, Quality of Administrative Services, Completeness of Lecture Supporting Facilities, and Student Satisfaction on Learning Motivation. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, *27*(1), 23. https://doi.org/10.17977/um048v27i1p23-33

Żammit, J. (2021). Maltese as a foreign language educators' acquisition of intercultural capabilities. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, *6*(9), 1–19.

Zou, P., Sun, W., Hallowell, S. G., Luo, Y., Lee, C., & Ge, L. (2019). Use of guest speakers in nursing education: An integrative review of multidisciplinary literature. *Advances in Medical Education and Practice*, *10*, 175–189. https://doi.org/10.2147/AMEP.S196456