

Engagement Strategy to Reduce the Number of Inactive Students at Marshal Suryadarma Aerospace University

I Dewa Ketut Kerta Widana¹, Syamsunasir Syamsunasir², Herni Pujiati³, Ersha Mayori⁴,
Primadi Candra Susanto⁵

¹Faculty of Postgraduate Economics and Business, Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Indonesia

²Faculty of Postgraduate Economics and Business, Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Indonesia

³Faculty of Postgraduate Economics and Business, Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Indonesia

⁴Faculty of Aerospace and Industrial Engineering, Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Indonesia

⁵Institut Transportasi dan Logistik Trisakti, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Received: 26 Dec 2024

Revised: 14 Feb 2025

Accepted: 22 Feb 2025

Introduction: This research aims to identify the impact, causal factors, and engagement strategies that can be implemented to reduce the number of inactive students.

Objectives: The object of the research was to examine students of Marshal Suryadarma Aerospace University. Where students are a vital component in the learning process, but in the process, various challenges result in inactive students. The phenomenon of non-active students is a significant problem in the world of higher education, especially at Marshal Suryadarma Aerospace University.

Methods: The research method used is a qualitative approach with in-depth interview techniques with various stakeholders, including students, lecturers, and campus administration.

Results: The results showed that inactive students have a broad impact, both for individuals, namely cost / financial losses, loss of career opportunities, loss of opportunities to improve skills, decreased motivation, psychological pressure, loss of opportunities to complete studies on time or delay graduation, loss of energy, loss of academic social networks, complicated reactivation processes, and feelings of shame when having to repeat with younger generations of students, as well as for institutions, namely tarnishing the good name of the campus, losing sources of income or university finances, disrupting university operations, affecting data reporting in PDDikti, and hampering the construction of campus facilities.

Conclusions: Factors causing inactive students are categorized into curriculum factors (difficulty in adjusting the curriculum, lagging behind courses, difficulty adapting, the length of the RPL program value conversion process, whitening plans, difficulty getting grades, difficulty taking credits), students (career or busy work, health problems, lack of confidence, feeling neglected, and not in accordance with the study program), family (not getting scholarships, economy, motivation, and family problems), lecturers and education personnel (poor communication between lecturers and students, lack of academic guidance, many assignments in each meeting week, and difficulty completing the final project), campus environment (study program management in managing employee class students, education personnel or study program staff services, campus community, and a less supportive environment), and socio-economics (difficulty finding relevant internship opportunities, choosing other universities that are more in line with expectations, and difficulty accessing transportation).

Keywords: Engagement, Student, Non-Active

INTRODUCTION

The demographic dividend is a golden age for Indonesia. It must be well harnessed and prepared for it to become a profitable opportunity for Indonesia. To maximize this opportunity, there must be a balance between the quantity and quality of human resources. If this opportunity is well utilized, the potential of the productive age population can

become an added value (Saleh et al., 2023). Human resources are expected to have adequate education and skills to contribute effectively to the economic and industrial sectors. This includes access to quality education, vocational training, and capacity building to meet the demands of an increasingly complex labor market and global market (Achmad et al., 2024).

Higher education plays an important role in developing the knowledge, skills, and character of human resources to face various challenges. Almustapha et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of higher education in shaping individual skills and character through quality teaching. Higher education plays an important role in developing the knowledge, skills and character of the nation to face global challenges and preserve cultural identity. Higher education serves as a catalyst for innovation and collaboration in line with social, economic, and modern technological advances, as emphasized by the importance of global collaboration and social transformation (Van't Land, Corcoran, & Iancu, 2021). Higher education enhances intellectual abilities, promotes creativity, critical thinking, and adaptation to modern technology (Martín-Cudero, Cid-Cid, & Guede-Cid, 2024).

The learning process in higher education involves various interacting components to achieve effective educational goals (Hutahaeen et al., 2024). The close relationship between components in higher education contributes to the success of the learning process in higher education, and a deep understanding of these relationships can help design learning systems that are more responsive and effective to the needs of students and the development of science.

Students are an important component in the learning process, as they are the main subjects who have different needs and characteristics that influence their interactions and learning methods in higher education. In addition, the quality of educational services, facilities, administrative services, and academic support are important supporting factors for students' academic success and well-being (Erwina et al., 2024). Understanding and meeting these needs is key to maximizing students' learning potential and achieving desired educational goals.

Various challenges, such as psychological barriers, time management, educational costs, and social pressures, often become barriers to students continuing their studies. These challenges can result in inactive students who are forced to drop out before completing their studies. Therefore, higher education institutions need to provide effective support and strategies to help students overcome these obstacles so that they can successfully complete their education (Tinto, 2012).

Active students who complete their education tend to have strong motivational factors. Student motivation is often driven by the need for self-actualization, which is explained by Maslow's Theory of Needs in the context of modern education, which motivates individuals to reach their highest potential (Zhou & Brown, 2015). Additionally, self-determination theory suggests that individuals will continue to engage in activities that provide them with a sense of autonomy, competence, and social connectedness (Ryan & Deci, 2021). External factors such as family support, a conducive learning environment, scholarships, and campus facilities also play an important role in their success (Vansteenkiste et al., 2018).

On the other hand, inactive students who choose to drop out of academic activities are generally influenced by various internal and external factors. Internal factors include low motivation, poor time management, health problems, and academic stress. According to the Expectancy-Value Theory, students' decisions to continue or discontinue their studies depend on their perceptions of the value of education and its benefits compared to the effort and sacrifices required (Pinneo & Nolen, 2024). When students feel that the outcomes of their education are not worth the challenges, the likelihood of dropping out increases. External factors such as economic pressures, educational costs, family problems, and lack of social support also play a significant role. The decision to drop out of higher education can have long-term consequences, such as the loss of educational and career opportunities and negative effects on institutions through an increase in the number of inactive students (Moffat & Roth, 2024).

The high number of inactive students in higher education is a critical issue as it can have a significant impact on the reputation and quality of institutions. Low retention rates often reflect a lack of academic and social support from institutions, which is essential to help students complete their studies (Panebianco et al., 2024). Low retention rates can affect perceptions of educational quality because they indicate weaknesses in the institution's efforts to support students through to graduation. External factors such as financial problems and inadequate social support also play a role in students' decisions to drop out (Elfeky, Najmi, & Elbyaly, 2024). Low accreditation due to low retention and

graduation rates not only affects the image of the institution, but also reduces the competitiveness of higher education institutions in attracting new students and maintaining their existence amidst increasingly fierce competition (BAN-PT, 2018).

Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma (Unsurya), established in Jakarta on March 11, 1987 under the Adi Upaya Foundation (Yasau), is a private university that offers academic and vocational programs in five faculties, as well as postgraduate programs, including a Master of Management program. The Faculty of Aerospace and Industrial Engineering, the Faculty of Computer Science and Design, the Faculty of Economics and Business, the Faculty of Law, and the Faculty of Health Sciences offer a variety of excellent programs relevant to industry needs and scientific developments, from aeronautical engineering to nursing.

Unsurya continues to adapt to the demands of modern education, especially in the face of the digital age, with more than 4,000 students. In its learning process, Unsurya implements offline, online and blended learning methods. Offline learning supports direct interaction between teachers and students, while online methods provide flexibility for students to study at any time. The blended learning model is carried out by combining the two methods, aiming to create an effective and adaptive learning experience for students in different conditions. In fact, Unsurya faces the problem of a large number of inactive students, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Number of Active and Inactive Students at Marsekal Suryadarma Air Force University in the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 Academic Years

No	Academic Year	Number of Students	Active		Non-Active	
			Total	Percent %	Total	Percent %
1.	2023 / 2024	3.837	2.840	74,1	997	25.9
2.	2024 / 2025	4.090	2.959	72.4	1.131	27.6

Source: Academic Administration Bureau, (BAA) Unsurya, 2024

Based on Table 1. 1 above shows that the number of students at Unsurya increased by 6.59% from the 2023/2024 academic year to the 2024/2025 academic year. However, the success in increasing the number of new students was accompanied by a decrease in the number of active students or an increase in the number of inactive students by 1.7%, meaning that the number of inactive students increased from 25.9% in the 2023/2024 academic year to 27.6% in the 2024/2025 academic year. This situation is expected to have an impact on the university's performance.

In response to this, the university has implemented various efforts and measures to anticipate and address these issues, including involving relevant parties in promoting new student admissions, improving service management, and implementing mentoring programs and related initiatives. This is one of the efforts to support the main objectives pursued by the government and the university, namely to reduce the number of inactive students (Buizza *et al.*, 2024).

Based on the background of the problem described above, the urgency of conducting research entitled "Engagement Strategies to Reduce the Number of Inactive Students at Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma University" is considered very important. This study aims to analyze the impact of inactive students on the learning process at Unsurya and the factors that influence inactive students, as well as strategies to overcome these problems. Through this study, it is also hoped that it can contribute and be useful both theoretically for scientific development and practically as a solution to solve existing problems.

The research questions to be addressed in this study are: 1) What is the impact of inactive students on the learning process at Unsurya?; 2) What are the factors influencing inactive students at Unsurya?; and 3) What are the engagement strategies to reduce inactive students at Unsurya?.

The approach used in problem solving is engagement. Engagement refers to involving all relevant parties (university staff, students, alumni, and partners) using stakeholder mapping methods, developing effective communication strategies in decision making, developing collaboration to foster commitment and strategic partnerships, conflict

management and problem resolution, as well as continuous monitoring and evaluation of sustainable alignment. The process is carried out from the student recruitment process (promotion using information technology, a family-oriented approach, and partner involvement), the learning process (creating a harmonious academic atmosphere, flexibility, mentoring, and affordable tuition fees), to the employment of graduates who are ready to work (competencies in line with job market needs so that graduates are quickly absorbed, through national and international partner collaborations).

This research has a state-of-the-art or novelty in terms of its specific context through a study of inactive students at Unsurya. The research was conducted by utilizing and exploring engagement concepts. Through these engagement concepts, it will produce holistic problem-solving strategies using a multidisciplinary approach, involving various parties to address the issue of inactive students. Considering the specific characteristics of Unsurya, integrated engagement strategies can provide more effective solutions in reducing the number of inactive students and produce high-quality human resource management in terms of productivity and customer satisfaction.

The roadmap for the research to be conducted over the next five years is shown in Figure 1 below.

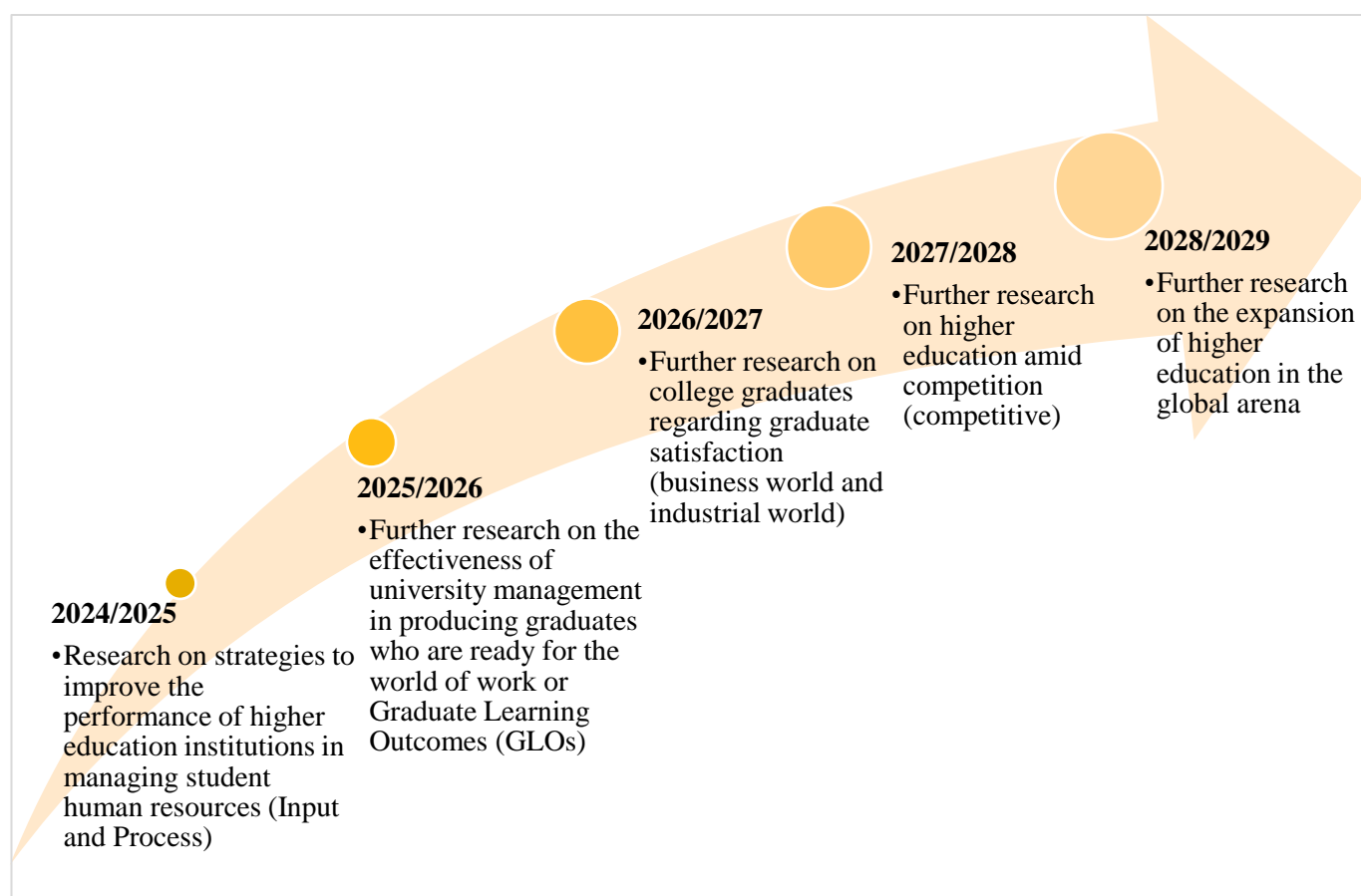


Figure 1. Roadmap for Research in the Next Five Years

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

Based on the roadmap in Figure 1, several structured steps will be taken in this study. From 2024 to 2025, research will be conducted on strategies to improve the performance of higher education institutions in managing student human resources through an analysis of inputs and processes. From 2025 to 2026, further research will be conducted on the effectiveness of university management in producing graduates who are ready for the workforce or Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLOs). From 2026 to 2027, further research will be conducted on university graduates' satisfaction with employers (the business and industrial sectors). From 2027 to 2028, further research will be

conducted on higher education institutions in a competitive environment. By the fifth year, from 2028 to 2029, further research will be conducted on the expansion of higher education institutions in the global arena.

OBJECTIVES

This study was conducted on students at the Suryadarma Air Force University. Students are a vital component in the learning process, but there are various challenges that result in student inactivity. The phenomenon of student inactivity has become a significant problem in higher education, especially at the Suryadarma Air Force University.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive analysis design. Data was collected using in-depth interviews, observation techniques, and documentation techniques. Seven informants were selected using purposive sampling. Data validity was ensured using triangulation techniques and data processing, while qualitative data analysis was based on the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, with the assistance of Nvivo software version 12.

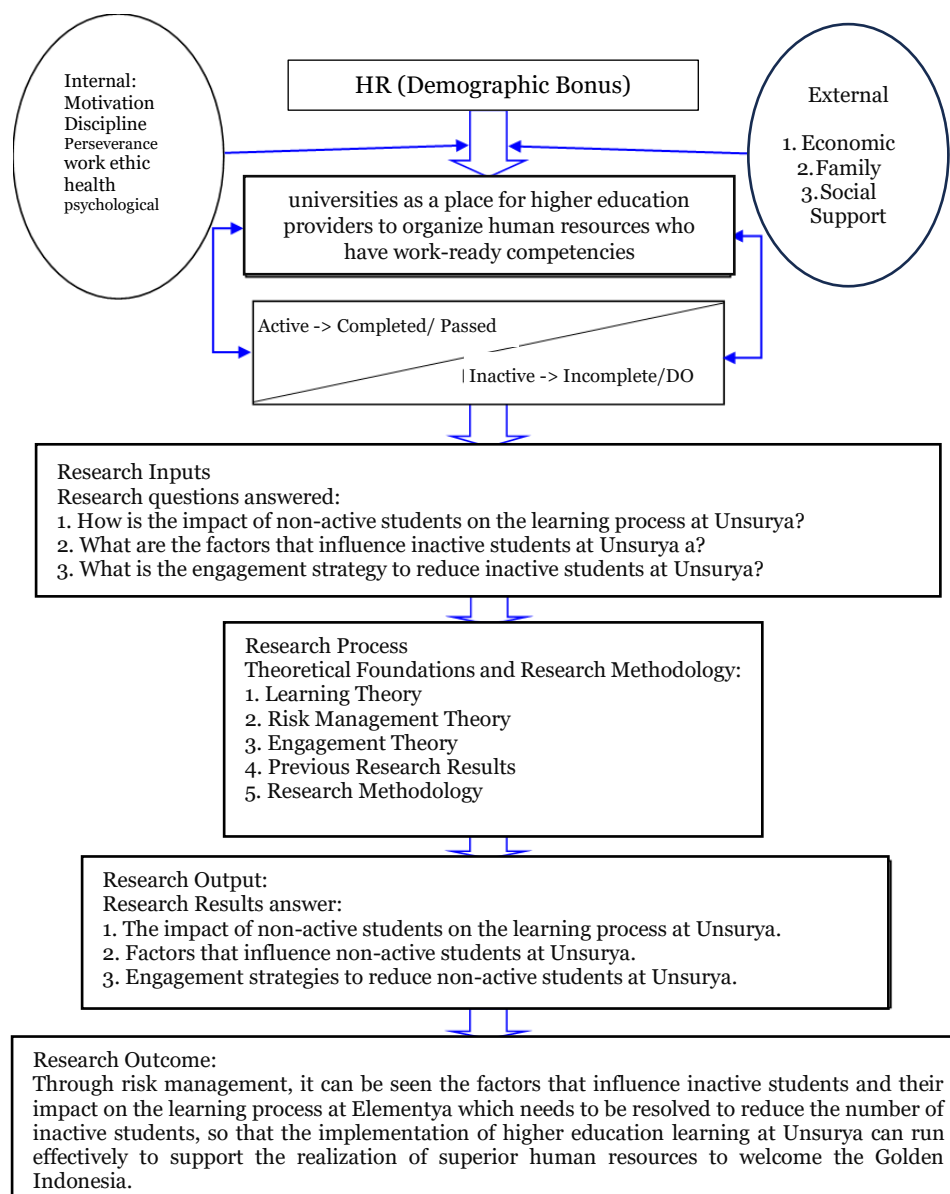


Figure 2. Research Flow Chart

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

The research outputs are as follows:

1. Research results are integrated into the course materials for the performance management course.
2. Published in a nationally accredited SINTA journal.
3. Registered with the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) office.
4. Supports IKU 2.

RESULTS

Data analysis is an important stage in research, which is carried out after researchers collect research data. In data analysis, there is a process of processing data into new information so that the characteristics of the data can be easily understood and useful for answering research questions. The data analysis used by researchers in this study was carried out using the Nvivo 12 software application. The following are the results of data analysis for each research question.

1. The Impact of Inactive Students

Based on the data collected, various impacts were identified as a result of inactive students at the Suryadarma Air Force University. Various data from interviews with research informants were analyzed using the *Word Frequency Query* feature in the Nvivo 12 application to identify dominant, recurring, and informative words. This list contains the words with the highest frequency in the analyzed transcripts. The results of the *word frequency* analysis of the impacts of inactive students are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Word Frequency Results of the Impact of Non-Active Students

No	Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
1.	Time	5	30	0,96%
2.	Finance	8	22	0,70%
3.	University	11	18	0,58%
4.	Cost	5	13	0,42%
5.	Power	6	14	0,45%
6.	Motivation	8	10	0,32%
7.	PDDikti	7	6	0,19%
8.	Operational	11	5	0,16%
9.	Career	5	5	0,16%
10.	Skills	12	3	0,10%
11.	Psychology	10	3	0,10%
12.	Reactivation	10	2	0,06%
13.	Shame	4	2	0,06%
14.	Academic	8	1	0,03%

Source: Researchers Processing (2025)

From the results of the NVIVO 12 word frequency query in Table 2, it shows that the word “Time” is the word with the highest frequency, appearing 0.96% of the time, followed by the word “Finance” with a percentage of 0.70% of the total interview data. Other words include “university,” “cost,” “staff,” “motivation,” “PDDikti,” “operational,”

“career,” “skills,” “psychological,” “reactivation,” “shame,” and “academic.” The results of the word frequency analysis were visualized using the word cloud feature, as shown in Figure 3. A word cloud is a visual representation of words that appear in the interview text, particularly in the analysis of the impact of inactive students. Words that appear more frequently are displayed larger and attract more attention..



Figure 3. Word Cloud of the Impact of Non-Active Students on the Word Frequency Query Feature in NVIVO 12 Interview Results

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

The analysis of NVIVO 12 *word frequency* results visualized in a *word cloud* shows the frequency of the most frequently appearing keywords in the text. The word “Time” appears most frequently with a frequency of 30, indicating that the topic or context most frequently discussed by the informants during the interview was related to the impact on the graduation time of inactive students. The word “Finance” also appears with a high frequency of 22, indicating that discussions about finance were also a topic mentioned by the interviewees.

Based on interviews with informants, it was conveyed that time is one of the impacts of being an inactive student. This was conveyed by informant N6 as follows: “For inactive students, the first impact is clearly on themselves, so they have lost energy, money, and time, and everything they have done so far has been wasted, which is a loss.”

Furthermore, informant N8 also provided an explanation regarding the impact of inactive students, as follows: “Students who become inactive will experience various consequences, both academically and personally. Academically, they will lose the opportunity to complete their education on time, which will result in delayed graduation and limited access to better career opportunities.”

Additionally, source N7 mentioned that university finances are affected by inactive students, as highlighted in the following interview excerpt: “With the experience of inactive students, the impact has been significant. Unsuraya’s financial situation is clearly affected, particularly regarding employee salaries, lecturer honoraria, and campus operational costs (infrastructure).” This is significant in terms of finances. If they withdraw, it means they will not graduate on time. As a result, they may be expelled. Ultimately, inactive students can negatively impact Unsuraya’s reputation. Additionally, tuition fees decrease, affecting campus operations, including reduced incentives for lecturers and educational staff. Furthermore, this also impacts research funding and academic grants.”

Overall, the impacts mentioned by the informants during the interview were analyzed using node coding and presented in a mind map as shown in Figure 4. A mind map is a process of visualizing data or themes found by researchers in their research into a visual format that is easy to understand. In a mind map, data can be grouped into major themes and sub-themes. Through a mind map, the overall concept of a theme can be easily understood through concrete and detailed visualization (Wahid, 2023). The researcher presents the impact of inactive students in the form of a mind map as follows:

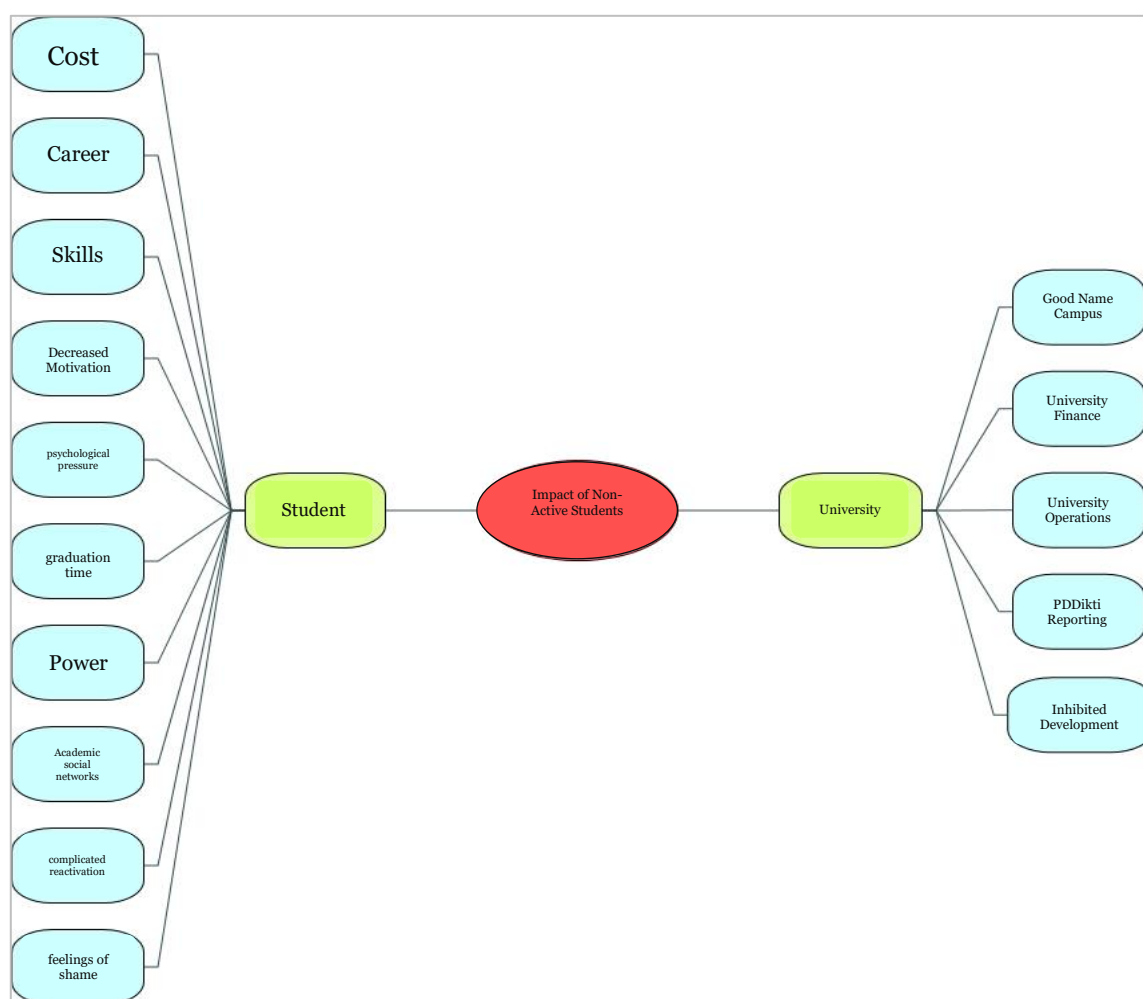


Figure 4. Mind Map of the Impact of Non-Active Students

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

Based on the mind map in Figure 4, there are two major themes of the impact of inactive students, namely the impact on students themselves and on the university. Within these major themes, various sub-themes have been detailed as the impact of inactive students, as follows:

- a) Students, the impact of inactive students on the students themselves includes financial losses, loss of career opportunities, loss of opportunities to improve skills, decreased motivation, psychological pressure, loss of opportunities to complete studies on time or delayed graduation, loss of energy, loss of academic social networks, complicated reactivation processes, and feelings of embarrassment when having to repeat courses with younger students.
- b) b. University, the impacts of inactive students on the university include tarnished campus reputation, loss of income or university finances, disruption of university operations, impact on data reporting to PDDikti, and delayed campus facility development.

2. Factors Causing Student Inactivity

Based on the data collected, various factors were identified that influence the increase in inactive students at Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma University. Various data from interviews with research informants were analyzed using the *Word Frequency Query* feature in the Nvivo 12 application to identify dominant, recurring, and informative words. This list contains the words with the highest frequency in the analyzed transcripts. The results of the *word frequency* analysis in NVIVO 12 regarding the factors causing student inactivity are presented in Table 3 below.

The same opinion was expressed by informant N6, who also provided an explanation regarding the factors causing student inactivity as follows: “One professor can be different from another. It all depends on the professor's personality. Some are strict, some are moderate. For students who encounter a strict professor, it can have an impact, leading to them becoming inactive and giving up because they can't compromise or find accommodation.”

The factor of program services, specifically educational staff, was mentioned by source N1 as follows: “Besides the new curriculum, it's really complicated. It seems like I'm the one who has to handle everything. I have to handle it at the campus. I've already sent the photos via WhatsApp and attached the data. But it still hasn't changed. It takes forever to update, so I can't access the system to register for my thesis when the numbers don't match. If I don't contact them, they won't contact me either. And I felt like that last year. Last year, I felt like I had to be very proactive and go to campus directly. But at that time, I didn't have much time.”

The factors causing student inactivity were analyzed based on six major themes: curriculum, lecturers and educational staff, students, campus environment, family, and socioeconomic factors. These factors were adopted based on the research by Najimi et al. (2013). These factors were then analyzed using node coding with the Nvivo 12 application and displayed in a mind map as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Mind Map of Factors Causing Student Inactivity

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

Based on the mind map in Figure 6, there are six major themes of factors causing student inactivity, namely curriculum, students, family, lecturers and educational staff, campus environment, and socioeconomic factors. Within these major themes, various sub-themes have been identified as factors causing student inactivity, as follows

- a) Curriculum, factors causing student inactivity from the curriculum perspective include difficulties in adapting to the curriculum, falling behind in courses, difficulties in adapting, the length of the RPL program credit conversion process, plans for academic amnesty, difficulties in obtaining grades, and difficulties in taking credits.
- b) Students, factors causing student inactivity from the student perspective include career or work commitments, health issues, low self-confidence, feelings of being neglected, and mismatch with the program of study.
- c) Family, factors causing student inactivity from the family perspective include lack of scholarships, economic issues, motivation, and family problems.
- d) Lecturers and Educational Staff: Factors causing student inactivity from the perspective of lecturers and educational staff include poor communication between lecturers and students, lack of academic guidance, excessive assignments each week, and difficulty completing final assignments.
- e) Campus Environment: Factors causing student inactivity from the campus environment include program management in managing working students, services provided by educational staff or program staff, the campus community, and an unsupportive environment.
- f) Socioeconomic: Factors causing student inactivity from a socioeconomic perspective include difficulty finding relevant internship opportunities, choosing another university that better suits their expectations, and difficulty accessing transportation.

3. Engagement Strategies to Reduce Student Inactivity

Based on the data collected, various engagement strategies were identified that could be implemented to reduce the number of inactive students at Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma University. The strategies were then analyzed using inter-node coding with the Nvivo 12 application and displayed in a mind map as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Mind Map of Engagement Strategies to Reduce Inactive Students

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

Based on the mind map in Figure XD7, there are four major themes of engagement strategies that can be implemented to reduce the number of inactive students, namely improving academic services, strengthening communication, strengthening soft skills, and providing financial support. Within these major themes, various sub-themes have been detailed as engagement strategies to reduce the number of inactive students, as follows:

- a) Improving Academic Services, Academic services can be improved through several strategies, including lecturer flexibility, academic and administrative dispensations, facilitating students, establishing regulations for teaching staff, creating explanatory videos of course material, and conducting lectures online.
- b) Strengthening Communication, Communication can be strengthened through several strategies, including academic mentoring, proactive approaches, responsive communication, early warning systems, counseling, monitoring, Liaison Officers (LO), and PDDikti reporting.
- c) Strengthening Soft Skills, Strengthening soft skills can be done through several strategies, including involving students in campus projects, forming a community system, establishing a student committee, and providing campus environment support.
- d) Financial Support, Financial support can be provided through several strategies, including providing scholarships and payment relief.

The identified engagement strategies were mapped using a hierarchy chart. This hierarchy chart is used to see and describe the results of the analysis based on the predetermined indicators, as well as to observe the trends in the analysis results. The visualization of the hierarchy chart for this study can be seen in Figure 8. Based on Figure 6, it can be seen that the engagement strategy to reduce inactive students tends to be early warning systems and counseling. This is followed by community systems, academic mentoring, payment relief, lecturer flexibility, and scholarships.

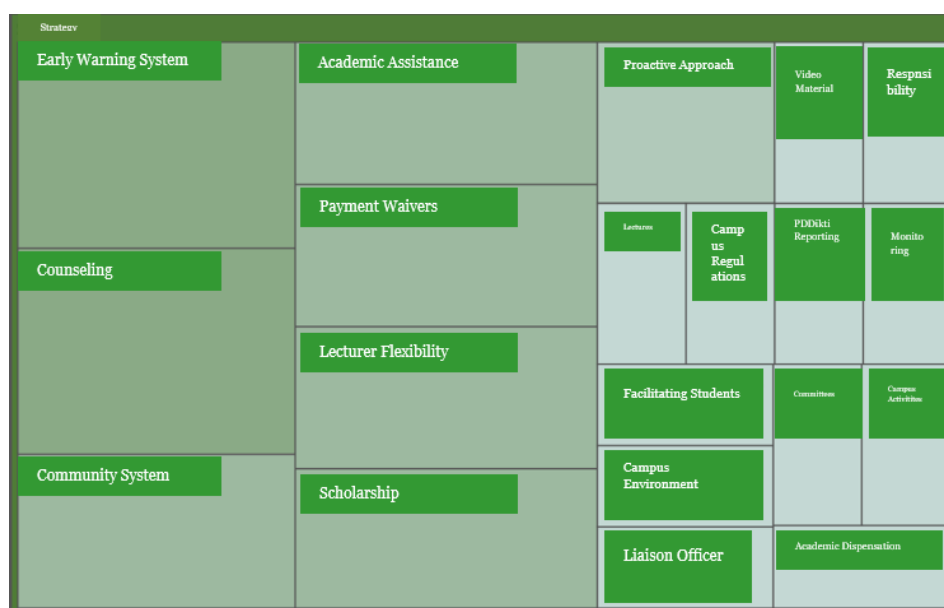


Figure 8. Hierarchy Chart of Engagement Strategies to Reduce Non-Active Students

Source: Researchers Processing (2025).

The identified engagement strategies are supported by explanations from the informants. The early warning system was described by informant N8 as follows: "Digital systems such as student dashboards can be used to detect students who start attending classes less frequently, experience a decline in their GPA, or have outstanding payments. The campus can send automatic notifications or contact these students early on to prevent them from dropping out."

The same opinion was also expressed by sources N2 and N5, who also provided an explanation of the early warning system as an engagement strategy to reduce inactive students as follows: "There is no early warning system for students at risk of becoming inactive. There should be a mechanism to help students before they actually drop out."

"There is also an early warning system for academics for students who are frequently absent or do not pay tuition fees on time. Actually, we should also ask why they became inactive."

Counseling as a strategy was mentioned by informants N5 and N6, as shown in the following interview excerpts: "I think the campus needs to strengthen its scholarship programs. For students who are less fortunate, activities such as monitoring, forming student committees, and psychological counseling can help them feel connected and supported by the campus. Currently, Unsurya already has a student counseling program. However, the number of counseling sessions is limited." "A university is considered good or excellent if it meets the requirements set by the government's regulations, such as having a counseling center and other student service institutions. The purpose of counseling institutions is crucial because they act as a bridge to address issues, preventing students from becoming inactive. As counseling faculty members, we must be able to identify these issues and provide solutions to students. Counseling plays a vital role in addressing challenges students face during their studies, whether academic counseling or counseling for internal issues."

DISCUSSION

1. The Impact of Inactive Students

Inactive students have a broad and multidimensional impact, both on individuals and on universities, in this case Unsurya. Based on research by Apumayta *et al.* (2024), inactive students not only affect individuals personally and professionally, but also have significant economic implications and disrupt the academic structure of Unsurya. The impact of inactive students on Unsurya students includes financial losses, lost career opportunities, missed opportunities to improve skills, decreased motivation, psychological pressure, missed opportunities to complete studies on time or delayed graduation, loss of manpower, loss of academic social networks, complicated reactivation processes, and feelings of shame when having to repeat with younger students. Meanwhile

Interview results indicate that many students who were forced to drop out experienced a loss of academic momentum, with the time previously spent on lectures not contributing to academic achievement, and difficulties in returning to their educational path. This aligns with the findings of Delgado *et al.* (2024), who reported that inactive students felt unable to balance academic commitments and often viewed the time spent on lectures as wasted because they could not achieve their academic goals. During their studies, inactive students have invested time in attending lectures, completing assignments, and engaging in other academic activities. When students finally decide to drop out, all these efforts do not result in a degree or officially recognized knowledge (Xavier *et al.*, 2022).

From the university's perspective, the high number of inactive students contributes to a decrease in operational income, which directly impacts the funding of academic services, facility development, and the welfare of teaching staff and administrative personnel (Dominguez *et al.*, 2023). This aligns with interviews indicating that as the number of students who fail to pay tuition fees increases, universities experience a decline in revenue, which ultimately affects financial obligations, including faculty salaries, operational expenses for facilities and infrastructure, and the development and maintenance of buildings.

Another significant impact is on the academic reputation of the institution (Moreno & Leandro, 2024), particularly within the Higher Education Data Reporting System (PDDIKTI). Based on research by Hassani *et al.* (2022), a decline in the number of active students can damage the reputation of higher education institutions due to decreased student satisfaction and loyalty. Campuses with high numbers of inactive students may experience a decline in academic reputation, which impacts their ability to obtain better accreditation and reduces their attractiveness to prospective new students. Interview results indicate that an increase in the number of inactive students can create a negative reputation, as if the campus lacks an effective system to retain and support student academic success.

Tinto's (1993) academic and social integration model emphasizes that students' success in completing their studies is influenced by how well they are integrated into the academic and social systems of the campus (Tinto, 2012). The inability of universities to retain their students indicates weaknesses in the mechanisms of academic guidance and support, both in terms of learning flexibility, administrative services, and faculty involvement in effectively mentoring individual students.

2. Causes of Student Inactivity

Inactive students not only harm themselves but also cause economic losses to the country through waste of resources and the loss of potential contributions from unrealized graduates (Aina *et al.*, 2022). Najimi *et al.* (2013) conducted a study on the factors causing academic failure among students based on an analysis of curriculum factors, faculty and educational staff, students, campus environment, family, and socioeconomic factors. Based on this research, it can be stated that academic failure or student inactivity is not caused by individual factors alone, but also by social problems. This is supported by the *student attrition* theory of Bean & Metzner (1985), which states that students' decisions to remain in or drop out of higher education depend on the interaction between personal factors, academic support, and external environmental conditions (Bean & Metzner, 1985).

An analysis of the factors causing student inactivity at Unsurya can be categorized into curriculum, students, family, lecturers and educational staff, campus environment, and socioeconomic factors. Based on the interview results, it was found that students who experienced difficulties in completing their studies often faced challenges in these aspects, particularly with lecturers and educational staff. This is similar to the research by Pustai *et al.* (2022), which stated that a lack of institutional integration and unsupportive faculty attitudes can increase the risk of student inactivity. A strong relationship between students and academic staff was found to have a significant positive effect on student academic success. In addition, the lack of effective communication between lecturers and students in learning has a negative impact on lecturer-student relationships, which in turn affects students' grades, motivation, academic progress, and overall learning (Deep *et al.*, 2024).

Academic factors causing student inactivity were obtained from interviews, including difficulties in curriculum adaptation, falling behind in courses, adaptation difficulties, the length of the RPL program credit conversion process, plans for academic probation, difficulties in obtaining grades, difficulties in taking credits, career or work commitments, health issues, low self-confidence, feelings of being ignored, and program mismatch. These factors hinder efficient learning and contribute to student inactivity. This aligns with the findings of Delgado *et al.* (2024), who stated that students' difficulties in adapting to academic regulations and the university environment significantly contribute to their decision to withdraw from studies.

Based on the research findings of Gómez-Salazar & Álvarez-Gil (2020), the causes of student inactivity are not only academic factors but also other personal or emotional variables. In this study, it was found that in addition to factors related to faculty and educational staff, there are other social factors such as economic issues, motivation, family problems, difficulty finding relevant internship opportunities, choosing another university that better aligns with expectations, and transportation access difficulties. These factors contribute to the problems faced by inactive students.

Based on the research by Moreno & Leandro (2024), it emphasizes the importance of a multidimensional approach in understanding and addressing the problems of inactive students. By integrating modern data analysis techniques and classical theoretical models, higher education institutions can develop more effective strategies to improve student retention and reduce the number of inactive students.

3. Engagement Strategies to Reduce Inactive Students

The increasing number of inactive students at Unsurya requires comprehensive intervention strategies to ensure students remain engaged in the academic process and complete their studies. Based on the interview results, the proposed strategies include improving academic services, strengthening communication, enhancing soft skills, and providing financial support, which can be implemented through increased student monitoring, strengthening communication and counseling services, academic flexibility, and more adaptive financial support. This strategy is in line with the concept of student engagement, which emphasizes the importance of active interaction between students, lecturers, and institutions in improving academic retention (Tight, 2019). In addition, student retention and success in completing their studies are highly dependent on the level of academic and social integration within educational institutions (Shaibou, 2024).

Monitoring or early warning systems for students at risk of becoming inactive are important strategies in reducing the number of inactive students. Based on the results of interviews, students who experience academic or economic

difficulties often do not receive timely intervention, so they end up choosing to drop out without optimal efforts from the university to keep them in the education system. Therefore, higher education institutions need to implement academic monitoring systems and be more proactive. This can help educational institutions improve student retention rates by detecting students who show signs of academic decline, such as high absenteeism or declining academic performance.

The need for an early warning system to anticipate inactive students has been explained in the research by Baneres et al. (2023). This study uses a predictive model to identify students who may be experiencing difficulties, enabling institutions to provide the necessary support before students decide to drop out. One method that can be used in an early warning system is an artificial intelligence-based system called the Learning Intelligent System (LIS). This system is designed to identify students at high risk of inactivity through real-time analysis of student activity data, thereby enabling personalized interventions to increase engagement and prevent student inactivity. Through the development of an effective early warning system to identify students at risk of failure early in their studies, universities, in this case Unsurya, can intervene in a timely manner to improve student academic success (Akçapınar *et al.*, 2019).

Strengthening communication and counseling services is also one of the student engagement strategies that is essential to reduce the number of inactive students. Based on interviews, many inactive students experience difficulties in accessing academic and administrative information, especially those related to lectures, filling out KRS, or leave application procedures. To overcome these obstacles, the campus can involve a Liaison Officer (LO) as a liaison between students and the academic staff, so that students can easily obtain the information they need without experiencing confusion in the administrative process.

This aligns with the findings of Delgado et al. (2024), who emphasize the need for a holistic approach in understanding and addressing the issue of inactive students in higher education. Interventions that consider academic, emotional, and social factors can improve student retention. Educational institutions are advised to provide better support during the transition to higher education, including comprehensive orientation, academic counseling, and counseling services.

Strengthening communication between students and educational staff can have a strong impact on student satisfaction, thereby increasing student retention. Darawong & Mukdashine (2019) state that there are five dimensions of service quality that can be provided by educational staff, namely responsiveness, empathy, tangibles, assurance, and reliability. This is further reinforced by the results of research by Supriyanto et al. (2024), which found that academic service quality has a significant direct influence on student satisfaction, which in turn influences student loyalty and reduces the number of inactive students.

Academic mentoring, faculty flexibility, and community systems are also engagement strategies that can be implemented to reduce inactive students at Unsurya. Based on interviews, many students face difficulties balancing work and academic commitments, leading to decisions to temporarily withdraw or become inactive. Therefore, Unsurya needs to implement a more flexible learning system, such as optimizing online course options, creating lecture recordings, and implementing a more adaptive assignment system.

The importance of learning flexibility by faculty members has been studied by Xavier & Julio (2022), who stated that active faculty involvement in designing flexible yet structured learning is crucial for improving student retention. Student retention and satisfaction levels can be positively correlated with self-regulated learning efforts. Lecturers must be able to provide a flexible and supportive learning environment (Turan, Sevda, & Sinem 2022). Increased student retention can ultimately reduce financial losses due to student dropouts (Hassani & Stephen, 2022).

Financial support also needs to be strengthened to ensure that Unsurya students facing economic challenges can continue their studies. According to research by Moores & Adrian (2022), scholarships and financial aid significantly increase retention rates among students from low- and middle-income families. This financial support helps reduce economic barriers, which are often the primary cause of student inactivity. However, this must be supported by proper understanding and utilization by students to ensure that financial assistance is used effectively, thereby enhancing student retention in continuing their studies (Rainey & Zach, 2024).

CONCLUSIONS

To address the various impacts and factors causing student inactivity, an engagement strategy is needed that includes improving academic services (flexibility of lecturers, academic and administrative dispensations, facilitating students, establishing regulations for teaching staff, creating explanatory videos of course material, and conducting online lectures), strengthening communication (academic mentoring, proactive approach, responsiveness in communication, early warning system, counseling, monitoring, liaison officer, and reporting to the Directorate General of Higher Education), enhancing soft skills (involving students in campus projects, establishing a community system, forming a student committee, and providing campus environment support), and financial support (scholarship provision and payment relief). By implementing effective engagement strategies, Unsurja can improve student retention and ensure the sustainability of education becomes better.

REFERENCES

- [1] Saleh, H., Hadjara E., L., Masaong, A. K., & Panai, A. H. (2023). Mempersiapkan Generasi Emas Indonesia 2045 Menghadapi Bonus Demografi Melalui Pembelajaran Berbasis Kreatifitas. *Aksara: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Nonformal*, 9(2), 949-958. <http://dx.doi.org/10.37905/aksara.9.2.949-958.2023>.
- [2] Achmad, W., Nurwanti, N., Fedryansyah, M., Sumadinata, R.W.S., & Sidiq, R.S.S. (2024). Taking Advantages of Indonesia's Demographic Bonus in 2024: Challenges and Opportunities. *Management Studies and Entrepreneurship Journal*, 5(2), 4425-44434. <https://doi.org/10.37385/msej.v5i2.4713>.
- [3] Almustapha, J., Dahiru, A. S., Abubakar, H., & Kabir, R. (2024). Perceived Impact of Quality Assurance on Teachers' Job Performance in Nigerian Context. *Indonesian Journal of Education and Psychological Science (IJEPS)*, 2(5), 297-304. <https://doi.org/10.59890/ijeps.v2i5.2489>.
- [4] Van't Land, H., Corcoran, A., & Iancu, D.-C. (2021). The Promise of Higher Education: Essays in Honour of 70 Years of IAU. New York City: Springer Nature. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67245-4>.
- [5] Martín-Cudero, D., Cid-Cid, A. I., & Guede-Cid, R. (2024). Analysis of Mathematics Education from a STEAM Approach at Secondary and Pre-University Educational Levels: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Technology and Science Education*, 14(2), 507-528. <https://doi.org/10.3926/jotse.2349>.
- [6] Hutahaean, B., Telaumbanua, S., Tamba, L., Hutabarat, R. G. N., & Sumani, S. (2024). Analysis of Innovative and Adaptive Higher Education Curriculum Development to Education 5.0 Based Challenges in Indonesia. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 23(4), 76-98. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.4.5>.
- [7] Erwina, W., Sandy, G. A., Fauziyah, H. N., & Effendy, M. S. (2024). EDULIB.
- [8] Tinto, V. (2012). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. University of Chicago press.
- [9] Zhou, M., & Brown, D. (2015). Educational learning theories. Education Open Textbooks.
- [10] Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2021). Self-Determination Theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. *Rajagiri Management Journal*, 15(1), 88-90.
- [11] Vansteenkiste, M., Aelterman, N., De Muynck, G.-J., Haerens, L., Patall, E., & Johnmarshall, R. (2018). Fostering personal meaning and self-relevance: A self-determination theory perspective on internalization. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 86(1), 30-49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.2017.1381067>.
- [12] Pinneo, L., & Nolen, A. (2024). Parent involvement and student academic motivation towards science in 9th grade. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02707-0>.
- [13] Moffat, J., & Roth, D. (2024). Entry Conditions and the Transition from Tertiary Education to Employment: A Cross-Country Perspective. Discussion Paper Series. Germany: IZA – Institute of Labor Economics.
- [14] Panebianco, C. J., Azar, T. F., Duffy, M. P., Nijsure, M. P., Sharp, E., Tamburro, M. K., Soslowsky, L. J. (2024). Learning on a Limb: An outreach module to engage high school students in orthopaedics. *Journal of Orthopaedic Research*, 43(3), 505-518. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jor.26010>.
- [15] Elfeky, A. I. M., Najmi, A. H., & Elbyaly, M. Y. H. (2024). Effects of Big Data Analytics in Learning Management Systems for Improving Learners' Academic Success. *Profesional de La Información*, 33(1), 1-10. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0016>.

- [16] BAN-PT. (2018). Panduan Akreditasi Program Studi. Badan Akreditasi Nasional Perguruan Tinggi.
- [17] Buizza, C., Cela, H., Sbravati, G., Bornatici, S., Rainieri, G., & Ghilardi, A. (2024). The Role of Self- Efficacy, Motivation and Connectedness in Dropout Intention in a Sample of Italian College Students. *Education in Science*, 14(1), 67, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14010067>.
- [18] Apumayta, R.Q., Cayllahua, J.C., Pari, A.C., Choque, V.I., Valverde, J.C.C., Ataypoma, D.H. (2024). University Dropout: A Systematic Review of the Main Determinant Factors (2020-2024). *National Institutes of Health*, 13, 942-942. <https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.154263.2>.
- [19] Delgado, Y.G., Pérez, P.R.Á., Esteban, M.I.F., Vélez, S.C. (2024). The Process of Adaptation to Higher Education Studies and its Relation to Academic Dropout. *European Journal of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12650>.
- [20] Xavier, M., Julio, M., & Fiuza, P.J. (2024). Dropout, Stopout, and Time Challenges in Open Online Higher Education: A Qualitative Study of The First-Year Student Experience. *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning*, 37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680513.2022.2160236>.
- [21] Dominguez, A.K., Rivas, L.A., Gonzalez, V.R., & Contreras, F.G. (2023). Student Dropout, The Economic Cost for Chilean Universities. *Universidad Ciencia y Tecnología*, 27(118), 17-28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.47460/uct.v27i118.683>.
- [22] Moreno, S.P.B., & Leandro, G.T. (2024). Complexities of Student Dropout in Higher Education: A Multidimensional Analysis. *Frontiers Education*, 9(1461650), 01-16. doi: 10.3389/feduc.2024.1461650.
- [23] Hassani, A.A.A.H., & Wilkins, S. (2022). Student Retention in Higher Education: The Influences of Organizational Identification and Institution Reputation on Student Satisfaction and Behaviors. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 36(6), 1046-1064. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJEM-03-2022-0123/full/html>.
- [24] Aina, C., Baici, E., Casalone, G., & Pastore, F. (2022). The Determinants of University Dropout: A Review of The Socio-Economic Literature. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, 79(101102). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2021.101102>.
- [25] Najimi, A., Sharifira, G., Amini, G.M., & Meftagh, S.D. (2013). Academic Failure and Students Viewpoint: The Influence of Individual, Internal and External Organizational Factors. *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*, 2(22), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.4103/2277-9531.112698>.
- [26] Bean, J. P., & Metzner, B. S. (1985). A Conceptual Model of Nontraditional Undergraduate Student Attrition. *Review of Educational Research*, 55(4), 485-540.
- [27] Pustai, G., Fényes, H., & KláraKovács. (2022). Factors Influencing the Chance of Dropout or Being at Risk of Dropout in Higher Education. *Education Sciences*, 12(804), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12110804>.
- [28] Deep, P.D., Chen, Y., Ghosh, N., & Rahaman M.S. (2024). The Influence of Student-Instructor Communication Methods on Student Engagement and Motivation in Higher Education Online Courses During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Education Sciences*, 15(1), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15010033>.
- [29] Gómez- Salazar, N., & Álvarez- Gil, A. (2020). The Role of the University Against The Abandonment of Studies, Pre- University Training Based on Innovation and Creativity Workshops. Innoeduca. *International Journal of Technology and Educational Innovation*, 6(1), 66-72. <https://doi.org/10.24310/innoeduca.2020.v6i1.4412>.
- [30] Tight, Malcolm. (2019). Student Retention and Engagement in Higher Education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 44(2), 1-16. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2019.1576860>.
- [31] Shaibou, A.H. (2024). Strategies to Enhance Student Engagement and Retention in Higher Education Learning Environments. *British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies*, 5(5), 13-31. <https://doi.org/10.37745/bjmas.2022.04182>.
- [32] Bañeres, D., González, M.E.R., Roldán, A.E.G., & Cortadas, P. (2023). An early warning system to identify and intervene online dropout learners. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 20(3). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-022-00371-5>.
- [33] Akçapınar, G., Altun, A., & Aşkar, P. (2019). Using Learning Analytics to Develop Early Warning System for At-Risk Students. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 16(40). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-019-0172-z>.

- [34] Darawong, C., & Sandmaung, M. (2019). Service Quality Enhancing Student Satisfaction in International Programs of Higher Education Institutions: A Local Student Perspective. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 29(2), 268-283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2019.1647483>.
- [35] Supriyanto, Burhanuddin, A., Sunarni, Rochmawati, Ratri, D.K., & Bhayangkara, A.N. (2024). Academic Service Quality, Student Satisfaction and Loyalty: A Study at Higher Education Legal Entities in Indonesia. *The TQM Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-10-2023-0334>.
- [36] Xavier, M., & Meneses, J. (2021). The Tensions Between Student Dropout and Flexibility in Learning Design: The Voices of Professors in Open Online Higher Education. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 22(4), 72–88. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v23i1.5652>.
- [37] Turan, Z., Kucuk, S., & Karabey, S.C. (2022). The University Students' Self-Regulated Effort, Flexibility and Satisfaction in Distance Education. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 19(35). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-022-00342-w>.
- [38] Moores, E., & Burgess, A.P. (2022). Financial Support Differentially Aids Retention of Students from Households with Lower Incomes: A UK Case Study. *Studies in Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950>.
- [39] Rainey, E.A. & Taylor, Z.W. (2024). "I Had No Idea": At-Risk College Student Knowledge of Financial Aid and Resources. *Journal of Student Financial Aid*, 53(2). <https://doi.org/10.55504/0884-9153.1793>.