

THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM AT UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH IN GENERATING A CONDUCTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: *This paper discusses the visibility of infrastructure integration in the context of sustainability of a conducive learning environment for international students at UMS in the post Covid-19th millennium. The sustainability of a conducive learning environment process indicates the commitment of the university's management in materialising the country's internationalisation policy. The concept of conducive environmental sustainability is centred on the vital functions and effectiveness of the infrastructure system implemented by a university. It has continuity with a system of well-being and welfare support which is an attractive factor in the selection of Malaysia as a study destination for international students. Ideally, the provision of a university infrastructure includes three components, (a) learning and teaching infrastructure, (b) Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, and (c) research infrastructure. This study has two main objectives, namely (1) to explore the views of international students on the sustainability of the infrastructure system in UMS and (2) to evaluate the views of students on the responsibility of UMS in providing a conducive learning environment. A qualitative approach using in-depth interview techniques was selected based on the background of an exploratory study. A total of 13 international students studying at UMS were interviewed online to obtain empirical data which allows the application of thematic techniques to the transcription of such in-depth interviews through the process of coding dominant and subdominant themes. The discussion of this paper utilises a selection of narratives from study respondents that focuses on three dominant themes namely; (i) views of international students on the sustainability of UMS infrastructure and physical environment, (ii) views of international students on psychosocial environment towards generating a*

conducive teaching and learning environment in UMS, (iii) the views of international students on the efficiency of the service system of the Centre for Internationalisation and Global Engagement Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS).

Keywords: *Sustainability, Infrastructure System, Conducive Learning, International Students*

Introduction

The global higher education revolution gives a positive indication by positional Malaysia as one of the Southeast Asian countries that is the destination of choice among international students pursuing studies abroad (Othman, Yusoff, Lukin, Ationg, Abang Muis & Mohd Shah, 2020). A decade ago, witnessed the introduction of Malaysia's New Economic Model with the country's main mission and vision to strengthen the higher education system in order to produce quality, creative, innovative and highly skilled human capital (Othman, Yusoff, Awang & Jupiter, 2016b). The aspirations are in line with the continuation of the country's higher education goals which is to shape the image and visibility of Malaysian Higher Education Institutions on the world stage. Consequently, the country's higher education internationalisation policy was introduced. It is a proactive approach aimed at catalysing Malaysia's ability to move towards the best higher education system in the world.

Malaysia has one of the best education systems in the Third World (pmo.gov.my). before the occurrence of pandemic Covid-19, Malaysia Education Development Plan (2015-2025) targeted and expected the mobility of 250,000 international students to further their studies in this country by year 2025 (MOE, 2021). This goal can be achieved through the expansion of study programme offerings and the rebranding of public universities and private universities in Malaysia. Based on the government's commitment to focus on the visibility of Malaysian Higher Education Institutions on the international stage, the Economic Transformation Programme has been introduced (Yusoff, Othman, Mohd Shah, Esa, Abang Muis, Marinsah & Ramlie, 2021). The projection of the education sector is upgraded as one of the Key Economic Areas of the Country. This continuity is evidenced when the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia increased its efforts to fund various teaching and learning programmes as stipulated in the Malaysian Education Development Plan (2013-2025) (MOE, 2021).

Malaysia is a proactive country that always strives to intensify the policy of internationalisation of higher education and emphasise the comfort of international students. Aspects of university infrastructure facilities whether physical infrastructure or psychosocial infrastructure become the main responsibility and agenda of the university management (Smith, 2020; Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Esa, Ationg, Ramlie & Abdul Rahman, 2021a). The action ensures that students are in conducive learning environment (Chelliah, Khan, Krishnan, Kamarulzaman & Goh, 2019). In addition, educators have the capacity to impart knowledge effectively in a good environment (Singh, Jack, & Schapper, 2014; Othman *et al.*, 2020). Supporting this aspiration, the coordination of procedures of the National Accreditation Board (2002) stipulates that every university must have a lecture hall of appropriate size and equipped with the latest equipment to meet the needs of learning system (Othman, Esa, Ationg, Ibrahim, Lukin, & Abdul Hamid, 2021b). As for technical study programmes, complete laboratories, workshops and studios must be provided for the purpose of the teaching and learning process runs smoothly (Othman, Jupiter & Mohd Suki, 2019a; Trujillo, Mohammed & Saleh, 2020; Othman *et al.*, 2021b). Ultimately, with a conducive

environment, students able to concentrate in lectures, engage in learning activities and gain a good experience while studying in the host country.

Research Background

The internationalisation policy of public universities can be defined as the process of internationalising institutions of higher learning from economic and development factors (Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Mohd Suki, Awang & Jupiter, 2017a; Yusoff *et al.*, 2021). Internationalisation is also one of the four specific directions outlined by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) for institutions of higher learning and public universities namely quality, autonomy, collaboration and internationalisation to restore the prestige of HEIs in Malaysia (Othman *et al.*, 2017; Yusoff *et al.*, 2021).

This is also in line with the strategic plan of the Ministry of Higher Education in an effort to achieve the mission and vision of the education system in Malaysia towards internationalisation. However, there are various challenges that need to be faced by a public university, including University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) in an effort to increase the enrolment capacity of international students. This scenario has continuity with the status of a hub of academic excellence related to the international policy and governance of a university that focuses more on university involvement in stimulating international level activities towards achieving first-class knowledge culture and mind development (Yusoff *et al.*, 2021). Recognising the potential of UMS as an educational institution of international standard, there are several initiatives that have been carried out by UMS to make UMS as the focus of international students.

Nonetheless, UMS has received the lowest number of international student admissions in 2020 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world. Table 1 below shows the statistics of UMS international students in the year 2020 (excluding mobility students). In this case, international students from China contributed a total of 72 students. International students from South Korea and Hong Kong were two students and students from Japan, the Philippines, South Africa, Gabon, Yemen, Maldives, Egypt and Pakistan each recorded one student.

Table 1: Universiti Malaysia Sabah International Student Statistics (By Country)

Country (Year 2020)	Total
China	72
South Korea	2
Hong Kong	2
Japan, Filipina, South Afrika, Gabon, Yemen, Maldives, Egypt, Pakistan	8
	84

Source: <https://www.ums.edu.my/pppg/>

Through Table 1, students from China recorded the highest number in year 2020. However, looking at the previous record of international student recruitment in the years before the Covid pandemic, UMS' diligent achievements in fulfilling the university's internationalisation policy have been achieved, thus strengthening the university's status on the international stage. The rapid development of the internationalisation policy of Higher Education in Malaysia, especially in UMS has given a positive impact in the national education system where the university has attracted the attention of the international community to this prestigious university education system. For example, UMS has strived to form a hub of academic excellence to attract international students to UMS and produce quality graduates with high commercial value in line with this era of modernisation.

This paper discusses the visibility of infrastructure integration in the context of the sustainability of a conducive learning environment for international students at UMS. The sustainability of a conducive learning environment proves the commitment of university management in materialising the national internationalisation policy. The recruitment of post-covid international students is an effort to improve the ranking of universities as well as to continue the effort of public universities towards internationalisation policy. It also aims to strengthen diplomatic relations between Malaysia and foreign countries so that the country's economic relations are always guaranteed. There are issues that will be faced by a university when recruiting post-covid international students in Malaysia such as the issue to ensure that all international students follow and comply with the Standard Operation Procedures (SOP), the issue to recruit international students from countries with less active cases and security issues to the entire university community if there is a new cluster.

The issue of ensuring that all international students comply with the Standard Operation Procedure provided by the Ministry of Health Malaysia is one of the challenges that will be faced during the recruitment of post-covid international students (Astro Awani, 2020). This is not an issue that can be taken lightly because it has a huge impact on an Institution of Higher Learning if there is an unwanted problem for international students. This is said so because there are some foreign countries that do not have strict SOP and this can result to the culture of not wearing masks in their country being practiced on campus. This should be taken seriously as it can lead to rapid spread of covid cases if this pandemic re-occur. For example, international students who have just arrived at UMS should be given exposure on the SOP that need to be followed during the new student orientation programme. In this way, international students will know more thoroughly and easily comply with the SOP throughout their stay on the UMS campus. In this context, the challenge is ensuring that all international students comply with the SOP at the university to maintain the safety and well-being of the campus community.

Furthermore, the selection of international students from countries with less risk of active Covid cases is also a challenge after making the recruitment of post-Covid international students. This is said to be so because recruitment from countries with high active cases will increase the percentage for our country to be hit by this pandemic problem again as well as endangering all Malaysians. Therefore, UMS need to screen for the admission of international students wisely so that pandemic problems can be avoided. For example, UMS has temporarily stopped the recruitment of international students from Indonesia due to having high active cases and recruited international students from Australia who had fewer active cases. In this way, UMS is also able to be a model university in addressing the issue of Covid-

19 in Malaysia. Thus, the selection of international students from countries with less risk of active cases can improve the quality of university management to the global level.

Apart from that, a security challenge to the entire university community if there is a new cluster. This is said so because UMS management must think ahead and outside the box if cluster issues occur. This is to avoid incomplete management that could bring harm to residents in a university. For example, the management of UMS can provide a safe and comfortable environment when a new cluster occurs in UMS by providing free food and suitable accommodation (Berita Harian, 2021). Three UMS residential colleges were subjected to the Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO) on 18th April (Utusan, 2021). The security challenge to the entire university community if there is a new cluster needs to be thought through wisely before making the recruitment of post-covid international students. The sustainability of a conducive learning environment proves the commitment of the university management in materialising the country's internationalisation policy even in the era of pandemic Covid-19. The concept of conducive environmental sustainability is centred on the vital functions and effectiveness of the infrastructure system implemented by a university. It has continuity with a system of well-being and welfare support which is an attractive factor in the selection of Malaysia as a study destination for international students.

Literature Review

Every individual has a tendency to respond uniquely to their environment. From the perspective of students pursuing studies abroad, the positive environment of the higher education system in the host country can generate better relationship, meet anticipated needs, and encourage the sharing of valuable experiences (Lee, 2016; Othman, Awang & Mohd Suki, 2019b; Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute, 2019). The sensitivity of the university management to offer the comfort of campus life is a wise move to attract international students to choose a university as their study destination. Nevertheless, the efforts of a higher education system to maintain a good and prestigious image is a long, difficult process and requires continuous commitment from various stakeholders (Othman *et al.*, 2020) Therefore, universities need to strategically build complete and up-to-date campus infrastructure services in order to provide a physical campus environment that coincides with the passage of time. Even the psychosocial environment becomes a necessity to support a system which is capable of producing a conducive learning environment (Othman, Jupiter, Abdul Hamid, Yusoff & Awang, 2018a).

In the context of Malaysia as a developing country, various preparations have been made to ensure that the country's public and private universities become an international higher education hub. Along with the high-quality education system of developed countries, the country's higher education sector not only strives to strengthen the image of higher education institutions on the world stage, it is also responsible for generating the country's economy through the enrolment of international students. In this regard, the university must be proactive and optimistic in providing a conducive environment to ensure the comfort of international students (Othman, Yusoff, Abdul Hamid, Awang & Jupiter, 2018b; Chelliah *et al.*, 2019; Moreira, & Gomes, 2019).

These efforts include infrastructure facilities to meet the needs and satisfaction of international students. Literature review is presented through two approaches, first, the author begins with the description by referring to the findings of scholars on physical infrastructure,

psychosocial environment and the relationship with conducive learning. This was done through a synthesis of the literature as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Infrastructure facilities to meet the needs and satisfaction of international students and the relationship with conducive learning

Researchers	Study Contributions
Chelliah, Khan, Krishnan, Kamarulzaman & Goh (2019); Trujillo, Mohammed (2020)	Students are given exposure through individual learning. The tendency to respond uniquely through conducive environments such as needs, partnerships and hospitality. Aspects of motivation affect self -potential, desire to explore new things, exploit one's strengths to the maximum.
Chelliah, Khan, Krishnan, Kamarulzaman & Goh (2019)	Four (4) types of conducive physical environment, namely social environment encourages communication & interaction, sense of belonging, self -esteem and academic environment promotes learning & self -fulfillment. A significant conducive environment is able to stimulate learning behaviors, feedback, perceptions & experiences. A conducive learning culture that leads to respect, friendliness, is helpful, especially in terms of understanding and language constraints helps students comply with university rules.
Othman, Yusoff, Abdul Hamid, Awang & Jupiter (2018b)	A conducive learning environment is a situation that has the ability to stimulate students 'interest and enthusiasm to engage, participate and focus on the learning process.
Othman, Esa, Ationg, Ibrahim, Lukin & Abdul Hamid (2021b)	The influence of the environment such as the physical of the lecture room, learning space, furniture, air circulation, lighting is designed to create a suitable learning environment can create a conducive atmosphere.
Othman, Awang & Mohd Suki (2019b)	A healthy psychosocial environment refers to the emotional needs of an individual with a social environment such as a comfortable and friendly atmosphere, triggering a competitive learning environment, providing equal opportunities, encompassing the features of safety, discipline, health, cheerfulness, friendliness as well as humanity. Harmonious relationships create a comfortable and fun atmosphere for students in seeking knowledge.
Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Esa, Ationg, Ramlie & Abdul Rahman (2021a)	Factors contributing to a healthy psychosocial environment include aspects of teaching approaches, instructor leadership styles, forms of communication as well as patterns of interaction in the lecture room.
Othman, Esa, Ationg, Ibrahim, Lukin & Abdul Hamid (2021b)	Conducive learning environment refers to the classroom climate that is well managed, organized and able to provide enthusiasm, well-being and safety to students to carry out learning activities.
Moreira & Gomes (2019)	International students value the fun of being in a foreign educational institution. Expectations regarding the image of the university were formed based on information obtained about the university, courses, academic staff and made a comparison of the position with the university.

Ross, Ta & Oliaro (2020)	Some universities strategically build not only specific academic rules, but also sustainable learning systems that have a lasting impact on image and prestige.
Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Mohd Suki, Awang & Jupiter (2017a)	Maintaining a good and prestigious international image is a long, difficult process and requires continuous, comprehensive commitment and being able to provide an environment for conducive learning.
Smith (2020)	Resource center, place of various information, reading materials can be borrowed, read, help improve teaching & learning. The quality of service satisfies consumer demand accurately, comprehensively and efficiently.
Singh, Jack & Schapper (2014)	The functions of the residential college include the responsibility of providing services, accommodation facilities, quality and nutritional services to meet standards.
Othman, Yusoff, Abdul Hamid, Awang & Jupiter (2018b)	The variety of menus, the efficiency of cafeteria service is important to ensure health, give energy to carry out activities of daily life of university students. The environment of the cafeteria dining room is clean, tidy with controlled food quality. International students are satisfied with the price offered by the cafeteria. Food prices are displayed similar, affordable, cater to the tastes of multiracial students and avoid getting bored with the same menu every day.
Lee (2016)	The menu corresponds to the diet of the students, reflects the efficiency of the service from and shows concern for the tastes of the customers.
Jupiter, Othman, Mohd Suki, Yusoff & Awang (2018)	The quality of services of the Office of International Affairs either from academic staff and support determines learning satisfaction in an educational institution. Organization, customer satisfaction measurement related to good service, effective to ensure facilities provided meet customer needs. Satisfaction of international students is assessed in terms of the services of the staff of the Office of International Student Affairs through aspects of hospitality and services, willingness of support staff to provide assistance to students, length of time serving students, documentation and overall services offered at the university.
Jupiter, Othman, Mohd Suki, Yusoff & Awang (2018); Khanal & Gaulee (2019)	Counseling services, immigration and visa management and similar involvement through orientation programs and faculty-organized activities are considered relevant in influencing student satisfaction and generating their sustainability throughout their stay in the host country. Most international students experience difficulties and stress during early enrollment in university.
Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute (2019)	The issue of personal safety is also one of the aspects of concern to international students and families who are unable to monitor the needs and well-being of children when away from family.

Khanal & Gaulee (2019)	In addition, international students are in a fragile emotional state and vulnerable to cultural shock in a new environment that is completely foreign to them. Therefore, the services provided to students are a necessity to them.
Sittisom (2020)	Complete and sophisticated infrastructure produces potential researchers who produce quality products. While a research that focuses on community issues can also benefit from research infrastructure with the production of publications in line with innovation and solving community problems.

The second approach is to apply the synthesis of the literature review through a discussion of the findings of the themes that emerges from the findings. The discussion was supported by empirical data as well as a selection of interview narratives with international students. Based on Table 2, the author shows the gaps in the literature review especially those that refer to discussions on learning and teaching infrastructure, IT infrastructure and research infrastructure at the tertiary institution level. The elements of the infrastructure are more towards the infrastructure of the physical environment including lecture rooms, lecture halls, laboratories, workshops, libraries, cafeterias, international offices, sports and others (Othman, Awang, Hamid, Yusoff & Jupiter, 2018c; Ross, Ta & Oliaro, 2020).

However, advanced and sophisticated campus facilities and services are not able to fully support the sustainability of an environment for conducive learning without involving aspects of the psychosocial environment where it is considered an important criterion that attracts students and influences or determines their comfort of an institution (Chen, 2017; Jupiter, Othman, Mohd Suki, Yusoff & Awang, 2018; Othman *et al.*, 2018a; Khanal & Gaulee, 2019; Kouba, 2020). Students are given exposure through individual learning because each person tends to respond uniquely through conducive environments such as needs, partnerships and hospitality.

Methodology

Case study design is used to examine the background of environmental interactions of a social unit, whether the interactions involve individuals, groups, institutions or communities (Yin, 2009). By taking such an approach, this qualitative study has utilised semi-structured interview techniques as the main method for the exploration of empirical data. A total of 13 UMS international students were voluntarily invited to participate in the interview. The selection of respondents was done randomly based on purposive sampling technique. The criteria of the study respondents are based on, (i) full-time student status at UMS, (ii) not involved in any university exchange programme and, (iii) not receiving any scholarship or any form of study sponsorship from the organisation during study abroad. Subsequently post-implementation of online interviews, further data analysis was done on 13 voice recordings. This involves the process of inductive analysis that is transferring the voice recording to text form (Flick, 2014). Finally, the process of transcribing and identifying the findings of the study findings is applies through the categorisation of themes using coding methods (Creswell, 2014).

Research Findings

Current trends witness universities competing to remain relevant by offering a range of comprehensive, high-quality study programme packages that meet the needs of the job market. The discussion of this paper presents the findings of the study on the perceptions of international students related to the sustainability of infrastructure in UMS and the provision of a conducive learning environment in UMS. There are three dominant themes classified as (i) Perceptions of International Students Related to Sustainability of UMS Infrastructure, (ii) Perceptions of International Students Related to the Physical Environment of UMS Learning and Teaching of UMS (iii) Perceptions of the Psychosocial Environment in UMS.

I. International Students' Perception of Infrastructure Sustainability and University Physical Environment

Sustainability of infrastructure that ensures a conducive learning environment is one of the important features for international students during the process of selecting the country of study destination (Chen, 2017; Jupiter *et al.*, 2018; Othman *et al.*, 2018a; Khanal & Gaulee, 2019; Kouba, 2020). University infrastructure refers to the basic facilities that is the technical structure where it includes the physical components of an interconnected system to maintain the quality of life of the campus community. Ideally, a conducive learning environment exists as a result of the pro-active nature of the university management which strives to maintain the sustainability of the infrastructure.

Infrastructure sustainability is understood as the ability of university management to follow the passage of time that is to move from one technology to a more modern and latest technology (Chelliah *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the results of this research present a study of perceptions among international students in relation to issues of the physical environment that meet the latest needs. The focus of the discussion was linked to the physical development of the campus relevant to the development of academic programmes as well as in line with efforts to make the university a conducive place of learning.

The focus of the discussion of this paper aims to utilise the empirical data of the results of qualitative studies where it is supported by a selection of narratives related to the issues highlighted. Majority of the participants in this study believed that the image of an international and prestigious university is a major attraction for international students, and they expect the image portrayed able to provide better career opportunities in working world. Expectations regarding the image of the university were formed based on information obtained about the university, courses, academic staff and making comparisons of positions with other universities (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018; Kouba, 2020; Ross, Ta & Oliaro, 2020). In fact, some universities are seen to have strategically built infrastructure development plans to impact their image and prestige through a comprehensive and modern infrastructure system. Most of the prospective students rely on current information regarding the sustainability of a university's reputation in providing a conducive place of learning. They agreed that they had received information that coincided with the actual situation regarding teaching and learning infrastructure, information technology infrastructure and research infrastructure. In the context of this study, respondents refer to the physical environment as aspects of arrangement, physical design, source of learning materials, lighting, ventilation and hygiene that affect the effectiveness of learning and teaching throughout their studies at the university. Most of the respondents interviewed classified the UMS infrastructure facilities as being in good and satisfactory condition.

Table 3: The personal international students' views referring to the sustainability of the infrastructure system at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)

i. International Students' Perception of Infrastructure Sustainability and University Physical Environment	ii. The Perception of International Students on Psychosocial Environment in Encouraging A Conducive University Teaching and Learning Environment	iii. International Students' Perceptions of the Student Affairs Office Support System
International Student 3 International Student 4 International Student 5 International Student 6 International Student 7 International Student 8 International Student 10 International Student 11 International Student 12 International Student 13	International Student 1 International Student 2 International Student 3 International Student 6 International Student 7 International Student 8 International Student 9 International Student 10 International Student 12	International Student 2 International Student 4 International Student 7 International Student 9 International Student 11 International Student 12 International Student 13

Table 3 above is the result of a study result of a study that shows the personal views of international students referring to the sustainability of the infrastructure system which is a continuous commitment by the university management as one of the factors attracting the presence of international students.

International Student 3 stated that there is a relationship between the influence of the physical environment in the lecture hall and the level of comfort of teaching and learning in the university. The location of the lecture hall is close to public access, learning space is suitable for the number of students, good furniture condition, air circulation and adequate lighting in the lecture hall should be among the details that needs to be emphasised to create a conducive learning environment.

“Honestly, I had some difficulties at the beginning of my studies here. I have to get used to the lecture routine at this university. Most of the lecture halls are located quite far from the bus waiting area which gives a bit of difficulty. I had to walk back and forth quite a distance to the lecture hall. Adding to the worry when lectures take place at night is a bit of a concern to me from a safety aspect. However, there is no doubt that the size of the lecture hall can accommodate large number of students. Only when it is too big, it becomes less suitable for a small number of students.”
 (International Student 3)

The view is based on experience as a student who sees the university's continuous efforts to meet the welfare of students, especially from the context of conducive learning needs (Othman, Yusoff, Abdul Hamid, Awang & Jupiter, 2018b; Chelliah et al., 2019; Moreira, & Gomes, 2019). However, a different view was given by International Student 6. The respondent made a connection between the comfortable environment by referring to the size of the lecture room is appropriate to the number of students. In addition, the lecture rooms

equipped with teaching aids are considered to have met the important elements of conducive learning needs. International Student 6 think that a conducive learning environment refers to a classroom climate that is well managed, organised and able to give encouragement, well-being and safety to students throughout the learning activities. In fact, the respondents personally categorised the reputation of Malaysian Public Universities as one of the best educational institutions in the Southeast Asian Region.

“If I was asked by close friends in the country of origin in relation to the infrastructure at this university, I would say this is one of the best eco-campus universities in the Asian region. I love the green infrastructure that creates an eco-friendly campus environment. The close distance between the faculty and the lecture hall facilitates our learning activities. There are times for lectures, a small number of our students are placed in lecture rooms within the faculty. Each lecture room is fully equipped with teaching aids. From the aspect of furniture, it is very modern and meets the tastes of today’s style. There were no problems in terms of ventilation and lighting. I also found that the maintenance of the lecture hall is well monitored by the technical team of this university because the hall is always clean and cool with air conditioning.” (International Student 6)

Meanwhile for International Student 10, openly expressed the happiness to have the opportunity to study at a university that has sophistication in terms of information technology infrastructure. The importance of mastering information technology has a great impact in developing themselves as students who are aware of the development of current issues either domestically or internationally. The advantage puts university students to be sensitive to current issues that can be used for teaching and learning purposes. Along with the rapid development of technology, the university is responsible for providing technological facilities to increase communication skills and personal skills which are the main criteria for employees in the era of globalisation (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018; Kouba, 2020). Meanwhile, the security aspect is also an important element that shows the importance of information technology infrastructure in providing a medium of communication between students and the outside world (Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute, 2019).

“Most of us know that the mastery of information technology facilitates communication among human beings, especially when the existence of technology applications such as Whatsapp, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram and other modes of communication. In fact, good infrastructure opens up space for us to expand our network of contacts globally. But what is critical for me as an international student is the two-way communication relationship with face-to-face in real time when wanting to connect with family in the hometown. To communicate is easier even if you are far away.” (International Student 10)

Issues regarding resource centre facilities were highlighted by International Students 7, 8, 11, 12 and 13, where all respondents argued that the emphasis and measurement of the library as a storehouse of knowledge in providing a variety of comprehensive and up-to-date information and reading materials is a physical infrastructure that must be emphasised by the university (Lee, 2016; Ross, Ta & Oliaro, 2020). A good library system is associated with students’ satisfaction with the quality of services and facilities where the function of the library is to satisfy user demands accurately, comprehensively and efficiently. The students

also shared their experiences of receiving good, efficient and effective services as stated below:

“This university library is one of the most exciting places for me to explore. When we first followed the orientation week, we were taken to visit the library. There are three things I admired. Coupled with an effective and student-friendly service system makes it easier for students to find reference materials. The well-planned infrastructure makes this library the focus for students to spend most of their time here. For example, there are seminar rooms for group discussions, multimedia halls, computer labs, reading rooms, research and postgraduate rooms, common use rooms, private rooms, Muslim prayer room, café and lounge areas.”
(International Student 7)

International Student 8 stated that the library infrastructure facilities at the university level are considered very vital and a focal point for students to find learning materials and to gather with other students to discuss and do assignments with peers. The 24-hour study facility is considered an additional point (bonus point) for students who live off campus and need a safe and comfortable place to study. The location of the library close to the mosque is also an advantage that can be used for Muslim students.

“One of my favourite places throughout my time here. ‘Thumbs up’ to this university for providing infrastructure that has become a ‘hot spot’ among the students. The library is also open 24 hours during exam weeks. While the outdoor environment of the library housed a 24-hour reading room, minimart, discussion and relaxation rooms and banking services. The location of this library facing the lake garden and the proximity to the lecture hall makes it a transit location and a ‘one stop centre’ for students. The location of the mosque close to the library also facilitate Muslim students to perform their prayer. If there is one thing I can complain about, it is the separation of male and female students study space. But I respect the rules of the university with an Islamic concept. It is just a bit awkward for international students like us who actually have no limits to mix with other students for the purpose of knowledge sharing.”
(International Student 8)

Various information and reading materials are said to help International Student 11 in improving facilities in daily learning as well as adding knowledge, especially through the selection of the latest reading materials provided by the library. The library management is commended for always providing the latest information on e-book and e-journal subscriptions for students used.

“Except for the very strict dress code imposed by the library on students outside of lecture hours as well as the library security guards who are quite strict, I do not have any critical complaints regarding this library service. I take advantage of the services provided by this university library. There are many e-books that can be browsed. Not only is the building spacious but equipped with various services such as inter-university book lending, comprehensive journal subscriptions and up-to-date reference books. The thing that interests me is that the latest book selection makes it easier for us to search for academic materials

for assignments. The learning environment is very conducive with the air conditioning system, quiet environment and many discussion rooms as well as a satisfactory level of toilet cleanliness. (International Student 11)

This decade, the need for research infrastructure has become an important component that can elevate the country's higher education system and put the image of a university on the international stage (Yusoff *et al.*, 2021). The complete and sophisticated research infrastructure in a university can produce potential researchers to conduct research that produces quality products. In the context of this study, some respondents expressed satisfaction with the research infrastructure provided by the university. For international students pursuing a programme of study in the field of science, the structure of the research facility is considered a vital necessity and makes a difference in the production of studies. International Student 12 expressed excitement at being able to use the complete and sophisticated laboratories facilities.

"I think I am one of the lucky ones to be in a university that has a complete and sophisticated experimental laboratory. Not solely dependent on theoretical knowledge from reading. We were exposed to 'hands-on' to perform experiments. The laboratory staff is very committed in helping students. I am satisfied with the exposure given. I believe the foundation for a good researcher is born from a complete infrastructure." (International Student 12)

Meanwhile for Student 13 who are in the field of social sciences argues that a research that focuses on social issues can also benefit from the research infrastructure by producing publications in line with innovation and solving community problems.

"As a student, I am very excited every time I have the opportunity to go fieldwork. We are exposed to methods of doing research based on real cases. The experience was not only an eye-opening to study societal issues, but it promotes the solution of community problems as well. Each of us had the opportunity to write a report review for each case studied and presented in a seminar. Therefore, the forum that is conducted is a platform for social knowledge discourse that can be used as a basis for student's final year project." (International Student 13)

In contrast to International Student 6 who refers to the main role of residential colleges in providing accommodation services and facilities including ensuring the quality and nutritional services that meet the standards (Othman *et al.*, 2018b; Smith, 2020).

"Occupying the top ladder is the fast internet access that makes a big difference for us with students who always surfing the internet for 24 hours to browse materials for assignments. I am not sure if such facilities are available in all universities. But for sure I enjoyed the accommodation facilities which complete with laundry shop, mini futsal, resource centre, premiere room and room for student recreation club. The 'One-Stop Centre' concept being introduced has greatly complement a conducive environment. I think the reputation of this university as an elite university has a lot of impact on the infrastructure system." (International Student 6)

Recreational facilities such as a complete sports complex are utilised by doing leisure activities during leisure time (Singh, Jack & Schapper, 2014; Othman *et al.*, 2017b). International Student 4 feel that the reputation of the university's infrastructure has continuity with the facilities offered, which is not only to provide facilities to university students but also to be the focus of use by the general public.

“My hostel is closest to the university sports complex so there is no futsal area for students staying here. Almost every afternoon we use the stadium facilities, play football and track athletics activities. I also noticed that the university stadium is rented for general sports activities especially from local government agencies and schools. This indicates that a complete sports infrastructure capable of generating university income. It is just that I do not quite agree when the parking area at this sports complex is used as a bus parking lot and university vehicle wash. It gives a slightly strange look to outside visitors.”
(International Student 4)

Meanwhile, the issue of the diversity of food menus and the efficiency of cafeteria service is also a factor associated with a conducive campus environment (Lee, 2016). This is because food and nutrition are important basic needs to ensure good health as well as provide energy to carry out activities of daily life of university students. International student 5 is satisfied with the price offered by the cafeteria. Food prices displayed on notice boards are similar to the prices charged and affordable for the students. The preparation of various menus meets the taste of multiracial students and is an important criterion is to avoid students feeling bored with the same menu every day. The menu offered by the university cafeteria includes food that is suitable for the students' diet where the variety of menus in the dishes reflects the efficiency of service from the physical and psychological aspect shows concern for the tastes of customers.

“Food choices are varied. Here, there are stalls selling different menus ranging from heavy meals to snacks. The taste of food is delicious. The prices are reasonable. Only if I can suggest that the residential college monitor outsiders who are also queuing to buy food from the student cafeteria. In usual norm the queue is so long especially at lunch and dinner. Priority should be given to students living in residential colleges. There is a numbering system for ordering food, but it does not work even if the food ordered has run out. That is all I am concerned about. In addition, the cleanliness of the cafeteria is also affected because outsiders often do not practice procedures such as putting plates back in the place provided and other rules that students follow.” (International Student 5)

In the context of the discussion of this paper, the main goal of the university is to create quality infrastructure in order to have a positive impact on the development of students' well-being. Thus, green infrastructure is a concept that tends to be talked about by international students in displaying the importance of the natural environment of a sustainable campus. The idea of an eco-campus being the current choice was also highlighted and succeeded in attracting the participation of international students to come and further their studies at Malaysian HEIs (Othman *et al.*, 2017b; 2019a; 2019b).

II. The Perception of International Students on Psychosocial Environment in Encouraging A Conducive University Teaching and Learning Environment

A conducive learning environment is a situation that has the ability to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm to engage, participate and focus on the learning process. A calm environment contributes to the effectiveness of learning (Trujillo, Mohammed & Saleh, 2020). Thus, the psychosocial environment underlies aspects of psychology and social relationships that have continuity with the effectiveness of teaching and learning methods of teaching staff. The discussion highlighted by the respondents focus on the interaction between fellow students, students with academic staff and students with an environment characterised by cheerfulness, friendliness, trust, humanity, safety and health (Othman *et al.*, 2018a). A total of 13 international students as shown in Table 3 provided have given their feedback on the psychosocial environment of public universities in the country. Among those that received attention was the suggestion made by International Student 2 which stated that each student has their own way of responding uniquely to their environment.

“Being a university student is definitely a lot of time spent reviewing lessons. This means that good relationships among students and between students and lecturers foster a conducive learning environment. Logically, we react as our environment does. If we are in a calm environment, the effectiveness of learning contributes to good academic achievement.” (International Student 2)

The results of the study also prove that the motivational aspect of a person can help enhance one's potential to explore new experiences (Trujillo, Mohammed & Saleh, 2020). When students are placed in a positive psychosocial environment, students can exploit their strengths by constantly challenging themselves (Othman *et al.*, 2021a; 2021b). The statement of International Student 7 explains the meaning of 'self-exploitation' as follows:

“Frankly, I am lucky to study here. A campus community that is positive towards international students greatly shapes our personalities to be more confident. The closeness of the relationship between students with peers, lecturers and support staff has had a positive impact on mind development. We are exposed to how to exploit ourselves positively, especially to obtain something that is beneficial in learning.” (International Student 7)

International Student 10 provides an overview of the importance of a conducive environment in stimulating learning behaviours (Othman, Yusoff, Abdul Hamid, Awang & Jupiter, 2018b; Chelliah *et al.*, 2019; Moreira, & Gomes, 2019). International student 10 believes that a healthy mind is significant because it represents students' perceptions associated with current experiences at university.

“What I meant is that the university has succeeded in creating interaction between fellow students, students with academic staff and students with an environment characterised by cheerfulness, friendliness, trust, humanity, safety and health.” (International Student 10)

International Student 2 also agreed with the university's initiative in holding a special orientation week for international students because they need help, especially in the phase of self-assimilation in a foreign country as referred by the study of Othman *et al.*, 2018b.

“I think the university acted appropriately to hold a special orientation week for groups of international students to expose us to the new culture. I feel that the orientation week programme that is mandatory for all new students at the university level does not emphasise much on the process of self-assimilation living in a foreign country.”
(International Student 2)

Before choosing a study destination, international students give priority to their own welfare by emphasising the security factor of the destination country to ensure the learning environment throughout the study period runs smoothly (Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute, 2019). In this context, the factor of personal safety of these students does not only refer to the state of the destination country which is peaceful and free from all forms of unrest or political instability (Othman *et al.*, 2017c), but it also refers to the security element from the aspect of accommodation provided by the university management (Ross, Ta & Oliaro, 2020). This is to ensure that students obtain a residence that the security is guaranteed throughout their university studies. It can be seen through the statement of International Student 3 who said that safety and welfare factors throughout the study period in the destination country being considered before making the final decision by International Student 3 and the family.

“I came from a country that is always in turmoil with the problem of wars of discrimination against religion, race and colour. Therefore, I do not want to come thousands of miles to a country that has a problem of government system. This is because from personal experience, it will have a negative impact especially in the process of my stay in this country. I chose Malaysia because the security factor in this country is not like my home country. To study, I need a calm atmosphere and security that comes from the protection that can be offered by the university as well as by providing good infrastructure and facilities.”
(International Student 3)

International Student 8 added by explaining that the decision made in choosing Malaysia was based on the testimonials of the higher education system in relation to the harmonious life of the multi-ethnic community in the country (Othman *et al.*, 2019a; 2019b). As international students who are excited about the new cultural environment, the feeling of excitement throughout their time in a foreign educational institution is very much emphasised.

“The decision to come to Malaysia was based on the testimonials of the education system which were indirectly linked to the country’s political stability. My family still adheres to the principle of national harmony only happens with the existence of a government that governs well and is evidence by a good higher education system. Many countries have a multi-racial society, but Malaysia is a good example of a country that promotes racial and religious unity. That is the attraction for me to choose to study here.”
(International Student 8)

The issue of personal safety is also one of the aspects of concern to international students and families who are unable to monitor the needs and well-being of their children while away from family (Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute, 2019). Hence, the explanation of International Student 1 regarding the emphasis on safety factors in terms of accommodation facilities provided by the university has been a priority set by the parents of the student before choosing a country destination to further studies (Lee, 2016).

“As an international student who did not get any sponsorship from any organisation, I have the freedom to choose any country to continue my studies. However, due to the family financing my education, I had to comply with their request. So, from the very beginning, the family prioritised the safety factor throughout my studies at the university as a condition of the chosen country destination.”
(International Student 1)

In addition, the statement of International Student 1 is supported by a statement from International Student 9 who claimed that while staying in Malaysia, safety and welfare as an international student is always guaranteed similar discussed by Othman *et al.*, 2019a; 2019b.

“My family puts conditions on me to study in a country with a high level of security. My parents are always worried about my well-being and because of that I made sure I did not expose myself to an unsafe environment. Malaysia was one of the top countries when I made the university selection.”
(International Student 9)

International Student 6 support the statement regarding the political situation in the host country (Chen, 2017; Othman *et al.*, 2017c; Moreira & Gomes, 2019) which indeed plays an important role in influencing international students to decide and choose a destination country to pursue their studies.

“Every day we watched the relentless wars going on in many parts of the world. I left my country just to continue my studies but at the same time looking for opportunities to work here after graduation. The political turmoil in the neighbourhood where I came from has also affected our diaspora abroad. Therefore, the education system of a peaceful country can have a different impact on the selection of students.”
(International Student 6)

This was supported by International Student 12 who discussed issues related to factors such as a stable political environment, war-free national security, freedom of speech, low unemployment (Chen, 2017; Othman *et al.*, 2017c; Moreira & Gomes, 2019) will be the main factors considered by international students in making a choice to further their studies in a destination country.

“Many factors have to be taken into consideration when deciding to leave our country of origin and study abroad. Logically, I would look for an infrastructure facility that guaranteed my safety for three years at a university. Conditions to be avoided include an uncertain political environment, prolonged civil war, racial oppression and the right to speak as well as inflation rates that affect employment opportunities in a country. I am one of the lucky ones because my family can afford to finance my study at a peaceful university.”
(International Student 12)

The above discussion proves that the dimensions of the university psychosocial environment consisting of collaboration, student relationships, varsities resources, innovation and decision making are indicative of the effectiveness of the psychosocial environment in a university identified as contributing to 21st century PdP practices effectively. In the context of this qualitative research, the psychosocial environment has been proven to be able to generate a

close relationship between students and the learning environment and in turn have a positive impact on the development and self-confidence of the students (Smith, 2020). For a university that practiced an internationalisation policy, the measurement of international students' satisfaction being met is a critical element because it will determine whether the facilities provided meet the needs of customers. As such, universities are seen to strategically construct certain academic rules that can impact image and prestige.

III. International Students' Perceptions of The Student Affairs Office Support System at Universiti Malaysia Sabah

Satisfaction of international students is assessed especially in terms of hospitality and services, willingness of support staff to provide aid to students, the time taken to serve students, documentation and overall services offered at the university. In addition, international students are in a fragile emotional state and vulnerable to cultural shock in a new environment that is completely foreign to them (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). Therefore, the services provided to students are a necessity to them. The establishment of international offices in each university serves as an intermediary medium between international students where the university management is expected to ensure the safety of international students and help solve any problems that occur among international students during their stay in the country.

Customer-friendly service from the international office becomes an element that is close to the lives of international students while studying at a foreign university. The quality of services provided by academic and support staff is also a determinant of learning satisfaction in an educational institution (Smith, 2020). The main function of the Centre for Internationalisation and Global Engagement UMS is to regulate the relationship between students and the university, especially in ensuring the welfare for studying at the university and living in the host country is protected (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018). Quality and efficient service treatment can be considered as one of the determinants to the level of satisfaction of international students throughout their studies abroad. Based on Table 3 above, a total of 13 international students have provided feedback on the services of UMS' international office. Among the views expressed by International Student 2 who stated that the treatment given by the staff of the international office at this university is at a satisfactory level, especially when it comes to the attitude of staff who are patient and always helpful.

"The first time dealing with an international office, the service I received was satisfactory. They entertained each of my questions with patience and repeatedly asked if I really understood."
(International Student 2)

Issues requiring immediate attention from Centre for Internationalisation and Global Engagement relate to student's accommodation, counselling services, immigration and visa management. While the same involvement through orientation programmes and activities organised by the faculty is also relevant in influencing the satisfaction of international students. The majority of international students experience difficulties and stress during early enrolment at university (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). Therefore, any problems regarding student visas or tuition fees are given priority and try to be resolved immediately to avoid complications. Statement of International Student 11 referring to the matter is as below:

“They entertained every question asked, especially in terms of student visas and tuition fees. For students who are facing visa problems, they will try to resolve them promptly. As for the payment of fees, often the problem is the exchange of foreign currency which confuses us. However, the problem on the student’s side is that we do not understand the process due to the fact that we have just been in a country that is completely foreign to us. Therefore, any form of assistance is very much appreciated.”
(International Student 11)

International Student 4 provides an overview of the importance of establishing an efficient functioning international administrative office in ensuring student satisfaction throughout their period of study at the university (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018). Appreciation was also expressed with reference to the assistance of International Affairs from the social aspects and cultural assimilation in the host country.

“Fortunately, with the existence of this international office that always provides counselling services to all international students has helps a lot in terms of academic, social, cultural and so on.”
(International Student 4)

International Student 9 believe that the quality of services provided by university management staff is also a determinant of the level of student satisfaction in an educational institution in a country (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018), as well as having an impact in recommending the selection of learning destinations for friends and family.

“In my opinion, if we are satisfied with the quality of university services, we will not hesitant or ashamed to suggest to our peers to come and study here.”
(International Student 9)

Meanwhile, International Student 12 emphasises the students’ mental well-being while abroad, especially when family and friends are far away from them. This is where a committed and reliable support system is desperately needed (Othman *et al.*, 2020).

“Furthermore, as an international student who travels far and wide in another country, we have to live independently because our families are not with us all the time. So, with the support system from the Office of International Affairs, I do not need to worry too much if I face problems and it is an important element in ensuring mental well-being as a student.”
(International Student 12)

International Student 7 felt safe by the friendly service of the staff from Centre for Internationalisation and Global Engagement and there was a social networking system (Othman *et al.*, 2021a; 2021b) that offered helps if facing any problems.

“Oh, I am sure they really make me feel safe. Like a big family, giving help anytime and anywhere. There are always programmes organised by them that involved international students. Each of us also gets a foster family outside of the university system and I personally feel it is very good for students especially in the assimilation of foreign cultures and a way to treat homesick with families left behind in the country of origin.”
(International Student 7)

The whereabouts of family and friends who are far away in the country of origin puts themselves in a situation where they need a committed and reliable support system (Othman *et al.*, 2020; Smith, 2020). This is agreed strongly by International Student 13 emphasised on a conducive psychosocial environment as a requirement for international students.

“As an international student who travels far and wide in another country, we have to live independently because our families are no longer with us all the time. So, with the support system from the Office of International Affairs, I do not need to worry too much if I face problems and it is an important element in ensuring mental well-being as a student.”
(International Student 13)

Concluding Thoughts

The discussion focus of this paper dissects the view of a group of international students regarding a conducive learning environment. The focus is on views on the priority of infrastructure integration in ensuring long-term sustainability of a conducive learning environment for international students at UMS. The influx of international students pursuing studies abroad before the Covid-19 pandemic has become a current trend where it is seen as a catalyst for the economic progress of the next destination country to be able to develop quality human capital. Therefore, the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia always ensures that the needs and desires of international students, which are basically in relation to infrastructure facilities and quality services must be equipped in advance by the university to ensure the satisfaction of international students while studying in the host country (Othman *et al.*, 2021a). This is in line with the efforts of Higher Education Institutions that work hard to ensure the quality of the country's higher education system in line with developed countries, thus attracting more international students coming to Malaysia to further their studies (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018; Othman *et al.*, 2021b).

This paper positions UMS as a higher education system that has the aspiration to develop the infrastructure of their respective organisations. However, constrained by various environmental factors that refer to changes in globalisation and the demands of stakeholders, the planned university development goals face various challenges. Having said that, this article focuses on the discussion on the findings of the study that reveals the experiences of international students who decide to study abroad and provide their views wisely by arguing the consideration of the factors of infrastructure facilities provided by UMS. The results of this research show that the desire of international students to choose to study abroad is now seen as a positive development that can benefit the destination country and the institution of higher learning itself. If viewed in terms of university services, the tendency of students to choose study destinations abroad is due to several factors such as the facilities and infrastructure provided. This is important not only to ensure the comfort of international students in pursuing knowledge but in order to achieve their level of satisfaction throughout their studies in the host country. Facilities and infrastructure provided by the university must be constantly upgraded to ensure the quality of facilities and infrastructure offered to students are in the best condition.

Another thing that should be taken seriously by the university is the challenge towards internationalisation is the effort to increase the enrolment capacity of international students through the sustainability of infrastructure. This is said to be a challenge because UMS need to act smarter to attract more international students by providing promotions such as

scholarships, hostel and health facilities so that many international students will study at this university as well as succeed in internationalisation and make UMS a hub of international academic excellence. Apart from that, UMS also practice the use of foreign languages in the teaching and learning process to attract international students to follow undergraduate courses because it can make it easier for the students to understand the lessons taught. This can be evidenced by the involvement of more than 100 countries to make English a second language in their national communication system and certainly the mastery of English makes UMS the choice of international students (Singh, Jack & Schapper, 2014; Othman, Awang, Jupiter & Yusoff, 2017b; Chelliah *et al.*, 2019; Othman *et al.*, 2020; Smith, 2020). The involvement of international students to UMS will certainly bring a global learning culture that can be followed by local students as well as produce quality graduates as an effort to increase the enrolment capacity of international students to public universities remain the biggest challenge of UMS especially in the post-covid millennium.

The challenge towards materialising the internationalisation policy of a public university is the university's management's efforts towards the internationalisation policy. There are heterogeneous efforts that have been taken by UMS in overcoming this challenge, among them are international student exchange programmes, international cooperation and international research collaboration. The student exchange programme is a proactive step taken by the management of UMS because it not only benefits local students, but it is also able to stimulate the development of the university. This is said so because when exchange students return to UMS, they will definitely share the knowledge and culture. The knowledge they gained in foreign countries become ideas in an effort to improve the weaknesses of UMS management towards world class, especially in the future. This programme is also able to build students' confidence to be more competitive in order to meet global needs and wants. International collaborations and international research collaborations are also able to increase the prestige of UMS in the eyes of the world with the production of new and quality products and studies that are beneficial to the world.

Ultimately, the management of UMS must play a role in facing the challenges of the internationalisation policy of public universities in this pandemic millennium. Following to that, most universities around the world are progressively offering various promotions to attract international students to further their studies at their universities. The discussion in this article suggests that the facilities and infrastructure offered by the university is an important reason to ensure the comfort of international students as long as they are at the institution. The level of satisfaction of international students on the facilities and services provided by the university also plays a role in creating a meaningful first year experience for international students (Othman, Awang & Mohd Suki, 2019b). Through the interviews conducted, international students think that the facilities and infrastructure provided are good, especially when it is related to aspects of teaching and learning.

Other facilities such as library, cafeteria and leisure areas also provided by the university are in satisfactory condition. The infrastructure facilities must always be constantly monitored to ensure the quality of services that are more guaranteed. In addition, there were international students who voiced their opinion that they would prefer to be in a smaller classroom setting with a small number of students. This is because smaller classroom atmosphere usually gives students more focus on the teaching being taught by the lecturer. Large classes with too many students will only make the atmosphere noisier and in turn distract them while attending

lectures. While the customer-friendly services provided by efficient international offices also play a role in creating a valuable experience for international students (Jupiter *et al.*, 2018; Othman *et al.*, 2018c; Othman, Awang & Mohd Suki, 2019b).

The function of the international office is as an intermediary medium between international students and the university, especially in managing matters related to student visas, tuition fees, accommodation and so on. The quality of efficient and friendly services provided by staff in an institution is a determinant of the level of satisfaction with the services provided. The other function of the international office is not only as an intermediary medium but also to provide support services such as talks, counselling and provide the necessary assistance to enable these international students not to feel marginalised while in the host country.

Similarly, with a stable political environment, national security that is free from all forms of war and adopts the principle of freedom of speech is a country that has the characteristics of choice for international students to pursue studies abroad (Lee, 2016; Othman, Jupiter, Awang & Yusoff, 2017c; Othman *et al.*, 2019b; Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute, 2019). Issues on personal safety, place of study and accommodation of international students are issues that must be taken into account before a final decision is made in making a decision to pursue studies abroad. The security factor refers to the situation in the host country that is free from all forms of unrest or political instability that can cause any accident to the public or any individual (Othman *et al.*, 2017c) Security factors are not underestimated to encourage the arrival of international students to further their studies in this country (Pawar, Dasgupta & Vispute, 2019).

In the context of the views of international students on the infrastructure facilities and services provided by the university, three main aspects were highlighted, namely (i) perceptions of international students related to sustainability of UMS infrastructure, (ii) perceptions of international students related to the physical environment of learning and teaching of UMS (iii) perceptions of international students related to the psychosocial environment in UMS. This discussion concludes that the priority of ensuring infrastructure integration in ensuring long-term sustainability is a critical element that has relevance to the conducive learning environment of international students. Hence, pioneered the priority of UMS' goals in fostering sustainability of infrastructure and elevate the image and quality as well as giving commitment in order to attract more international students to further their studies in Malaysia.

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