

STUDENT PREFERENCES FOR THE ISLAMIC EDUCATION MANAGEMENT STUDY PROGRAM STAIN TEUNGKU DIRUNDENG MEULABOH

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze students' preferences in choosing the Islamic Education Management Study Program (MPI) at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh and identify the factors that influence the decision. The research uses a mixed methods approach with a sequential explanatory design through quantitative and qualitative data collection. Data were obtained through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that students' preferences for the MPI Study Program are in the positive category. Factors that influence student decisions include personal factors in the form of interests, career orientation, and goals; social factors in the form of family support, the environment, and alumni promotion; and institutional factors in the form of academic service quality, curriculum innovation, facilities, digitization of academic services, and graduate job prospects. The research concludes that service quality, institutional image, and promotional strategies play an important role in increasing students' preference for study programs.

Abstrak:

Studi ini bertujuan menganalisis preferensi siswa dalam memilih Program Studi Manajemen Pendidikan Islam (MPI) di STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh dan mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi keputusan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran dengan desain penjelasan berurutan melalui pengumpulan data kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Data diperoleh melalui kuesioner, wawancara, pengamatan, dan dokumentasi. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa preferensi mahasiswa terhadap Program Studi MPI berada dalam kategori positif. Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi keputusan siswa meliputi faktor pribadi dalam bentuk minat, orientasi karier, dan tujuan; faktor sosial dalam bentuk dukungan keluarga, lingkungan, dan promosi alumni; dan faktor institusional dalam bentuk kualitas layanan akademik, inovasi kurikulum, fasilitas, digitalisasi layanan akademik, dan prospek pekerjaan lulusan. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa kualitas layanan, citra institusional, dan strategi promosi memainkan peran penting dalam meningkatkan preferensi mahasiswa terhadap program studi. Kata kunci: Preferensi Mahasiswa, Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, Pendidikan Tinggi, Kualitas Layanan.

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of choosing study programs by students is an important issue in the world of higher education, especially for State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) which continue to strive to improve the competitiveness and relevance of their study programs to the needs of the times. One of the study programs that has a strategic role is

Islamic Education Management (MPI), because it combines Islamic values with managerial skills in the field of education. However, the reality in the field shows that students' interest in the MPI study program tends to fluctuate and is not stable in various regions, including at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh. This phenomenon is crucial to be researched because it can reflect how perceptions, motivations, and external factors shape students' decisions in determining study choices in the Islamic education environment.

Several previous studies have identified various factors that influence students' decisions in choosing a major in college. (Izzah dkk., 2025; Nurazizah dkk., 2023) It was found that students' attraction to study programs is greatly influenced by interests, talents, and career prospects that are considered promising. Research by (Nurhasanah dkk., 2025) shows that students in Islamic religious colleges tend to choose study programs because of religious encouragement and a strong social environment. Meanwhile, research (Amalia, 2019; Rahmadewi dkk., 2025) revealed that spiritual motivation and perception of the relevance of the study program are the main reasons for students to choose the study program. Most of these studies focused on general study programs at large PTKIN in Java, so that regional contexts such as West Aceh have not received much academic attention. This condition indicates the presence of Research gaps which needs to be bridged through a more specific empirical study on student preferences at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh.

The socio-cultural context of West Aceh, which is thick with Islamic values, as well as the characteristics of its religious society but facing the challenge of modernizing education, makes the study of student preferences for the MPI Study Program important (Nur dkk., 2024). This study seeks to complement the gap of previous research by linking personal (motivation, religious values), social (family support, peer influence), and institutional aspects (image of study program, job prospects, quality of lecturers) in determining student choices. Understanding these factors helps the campus in strengthening its academic recruitment and promotion strategy, as well as contributing to the development of a curriculum that is more relevant to student needs and societal demands (Aji Wahyudin & M. Fahim Tharaba, t.t.).

The special purpose of this study is to analyze Student Preferences for the Islamic Education Management Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh by reviewing the factors that affect student decisions, both internal and external. Through a mixed methods *approach*, this study seeks to describe the tendency of students' choices empirically through quantitative analysis, as well as explore the fundamental reasons behind these decisions through a qualitative approach. The use of these two approaches is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the personal, social, and institutional factors that affect students' preferences for the Islamic Education Management Study Program. The results of the research are expected to make a practical contribution to improving the quality of study program management and become a reference for similar research in Islamic religious universities (Safaruddin dkk., 2026).

This study presents a study that is different from previous research because it focuses on the local context of West Aceh which has not been explored much in the study on student preferences for the Islamic Education Management Study Program. In addition to providing an empirical understanding of the behavior of study program selection in the field of Islamic education, the results are also expected to enrich academic discourse on the management and development of study programs based on student needs in regional Islamic religious

universities. This research also makes a practical contribution to efforts to improve the quality and competitiveness of the Islamic Education Management Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a *mixed methods* approach with a *sequential explanatory* design, namely the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by qualitative data to deepen and explain the research findings. This approach was chosen so that the research is able to provide an empirical picture of student preferences at the same time as to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons and considerations behind students' choice of Islamic Education Management Study Program. The research was carried out at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh, West Aceh, for four months, starting from the stage of preparing instruments, collecting data, to analyzing and writing research results.

The population of this study is all active students of the Islamic Education Management Study Program STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh which is less than 100 people. Therefore, the sampling technique at the quantitative stage uses *total sampling* (census), so that all members of the population are used as research respondents. This approach was chosen to obtain a complete and representative picture of students' preferences for study programs. At the qualitative stage, the research informants are determined *purposively*, consisting of the academic section, the Head of the Study Program, and the Secretary of the Islamic Education Management Study Program, who are considered to have a comprehensive understanding of policy, management, and dynamics of study program selection.

The quantitative data collection technique was carried out through a closed questionnaire prepared using a four-level Likert Scale. The use of this scale is intended to obtain the tendency of respondents' attitudes more firmly towards factors that affect students' preferences in choosing the Islamic Education Management Study Program. The questionnaire instrument was developed based on theoretical studies and previous research results that include personal, social, and institutional factors. Before use, the instrument is tested for validity and reliability to ensure its feasibility as a data collection tool. Meanwhile, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted directly with selected informants to delve deeper into students' reasons, motivations, and considerations in choosing a study program.

Quantitative data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics, including the calculation of frequency, percentage, and average scores to describe students' preference tendencies and identify dominant factors influencing their choices. Qualitative data is analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn, so that a complete meaning of the interview results is obtained. To maintain the validity of qualitative data, this study uses the source triangulation technique, by comparing the results of questionnaires and interviews. The integration of quantitative and qualitative analysis results is carried out at the discussion stage to produce comprehensive conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Characteristics of Research Respondents.

Before explaining the results of the research in depth, this section presents an overview of the identity of the respondents involved in filling out the questionnaire. These characteristics are important to provide context regarding the background of the research subject, which includes the gender, generation, and active semester of Islamic Education Management students. More data is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Force	Semester	Number of Students		Total
		Women	Male	
2022	8	8	2	10
2023	6	13	9	22
2024	4	10	7	17
2025	2	19	4	23
Total		50	22	72

Based on the table, it can be seen that the total number of students is 72 people from four batches, namely the 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 batches. Students are dominated by women with a total of 50 people, while male students number 22 people. The composition of these diverse respondents is expected to provide a comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon of student preferences in this study program.

Student Preferences for Islamic Education Management Study Programs.

This section describes the tendency of students to choose the Islamic Education Management Study Program and their level of satisfaction with the choice. This data was collected through statements that measured the main reasons and the firmness of the respondents' hearts when determining the study program at the university. The results of the calculation of the percentage of respondents' answers can be seen in the table below:

Table 2. Student preferences and satisfaction

Statement	Percentage			
	Setuju	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am confident that I have chosen the Islamic Education Management Study Program correctly.	69%	28.6%	2.4%	0%
If given the opportunity to repeat the choice, I still choose the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	57.1%	33.3%	9.5%	0%
I would recommend the Islamic Education Management Study Program to others.	64.3%	31%	4.8%	0%

In general, I feel satisfied as a student of the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	57.1%	42.9%	0%	0%
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The data from the questionnaire shows that overall, students' preferences for the MPI study program are in the category of agree. This shows that most students are satisfied with their academic choices and have a sense of pride in being part of the MPI community.

Factors Influencing Student Preferences

Personnel factor

Personal factors are related to internal impulses that arise from within humans, such as interests, talents, and future goals. The respondents' assessment of the influence of this personal factor is presented in the table below.

Table 3. Personal Factors

Statement	Percentage			
	Setuju	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I chose the Islamic Education Management Study Program because it suits my personal interests.	64.3%	31%	4.8%	0%
The Islamic Education Management Study Program is in accordance with my goals and future plans.	64.3%	33.3%	2.4%	0%
Islamic values are my main consideration in choosing the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%
I feel that my ability and potential are in accordance with the field of Islamic Education Management.	64.3%	28.6%	7.1%	0%
I have an interest in a career in education after graduating from the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	66.7%	31%	2.4%	0%

The above results illustrate that internal motivation is a strong foundation for students. The high score in the aspect of ideals shows that students choose MPI because they see the compatibility between their personal vision and the profile of the graduates offered.

Social Factors

In addition to internal encouragement, the social environment also influences student decisions. This factor includes suggestions from parents, peer influence, and the image of the study program in the eyes of the public. The following is the distribution of respondents' answers related to social factors

Table 4. Social Factors

Questionnaire	Percentage			
	Setuju	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My parents or family encouraged me to choose the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	61.9%	14,3%	23.8%	0%
Recommendations from friends or alumni influenced my decision to choose the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	40.5%	9.5%	47.6%	2.4%
The community environment where I live supports my choice of the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	61.9%	19%	9.5%	9.5%
The positive view of society towards Islamic Education Management graduates influenced my choice.	73.8%	11.9%	9.5%	4.8%
Information from social media or campus websites helped me in choosing the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	66.7 %	31%	2.4%	0%

Based on this presentation, it can be seen that influence (family/environment) plays an important role. This shows that the decision to choose a study program cannot be separated from the support and references of the closest people around the students.

Institutional Factors

Institutional factors are related to the attributes or advantages possessed by the institution/study program itself, such as accreditation, quality of lecturers, and facilities. The students' responses regarding the influence of these factors are summarized in the table below:

Table 5. Institutional factors

Questionnaire	Percentage			
	Setuju	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The image of the Islamic Education Management Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh is relatively good.	71.4%	26.2%	2.4%	0%
The curriculum of the Islamic Education Management Study Program is in accordance with the needs of the world of work.	83.3%	16.7%	0%	0%
The quality of lecturers is an important consideration for me in choosing the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	69%	26.2%	4.8%	0%
Academic facilities and services supported me in choosing the Islamic Education Management Study Program.	66.7%	16.7%	14.3%	2.4%
The job prospects of graduates of the Islamic Education Management Study Program are the main reason why I chose this study program.	78.6%	14.3%	4.8%	2.4%

The data shows that the quality aspect of the institution is a logical consideration for respondents. The credibility of the institution and the reputation of the study program are the main attractions for prospective students in making choices in the MPI study program.

Perspectives of Academics and Study Program Managers on Student Preferences

To strengthen the quantitative data from the questionnaire, in-depth interviews have been conducted with the study program management and the Academic Party. This aims to see how academics view the phenomenon of student preferences in terms of policy and study program development. The following is a summary of the opinions of the speakers.

Based on the results of direct interviews with the Head of the Academic Subdivision, the Head of the Study Program, and the Secretary of the Study Program, it can be concluded that the growth in the number of students in the Islamic Education Management Study Program (MPI) at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh shows a stagnant or stable trend without a significant spike over the past six years. An interesting phenomenon arises when the number of registrants often exceeds the set quota, for example, reaching 26 registrants out of a quota of 15 people, but the main challenge lies in the low conversion of registrants into registered students who have a Student Identification Number (NIM).

Students' decisions in choosing this study program are dominated by internal factors or personal desires. Employment prospects are the main consideration. Students are interested in the MPI study program because of the understanding that their graduates are directed to become managerial personnel or administrative staff in educational institutions, not as educators (teachers). This is the selling point that distinguishes MPI from other teacher training study programs.

As a basic technical implementation unit, the MPI Study Program has a crucial role in maintaining academic sustainability at the institutional level. To increase attractiveness, the study program takes various strategic steps, including:

- 1) Comparative Advantage: positioning itself as the choice of state universities (PTN) that have higher marketability than similar study programs at private universities around
- 2) Quality of infrastructure and human resources: supported by more complete facilities and infrastructure in the west-south region of Aceh, as well as competent and linear educators in their fields.
- 3) Value integration: developing managerial values and Islamic ethics, which are the main differentiators in Islamic educational institutions.
- 4) Curriculum innovation and graduation: carry out curriculum updates by 2025 according to national association standards and industry dynamics. In addition, there is an innovation in the graduation path without a thesis through the publication of scientific articles in reputable journals (at least SINTA 4)

Academics view service quality as the spearhead of building a positive image. The implementation of the Academic Information System (SIKAD) has been fully integrated to support the digitization of services, allowing students to take care of administration independently and responsively, from leave applications to certificates. Prompt service is considered a form of appreciation for students, which indirectly reinforces their loyalty and satisfaction.

The biggest obstacle faced is the stigma of society that equates MPI with the Islamic Religious Education Study Program (PAI). The study program continues to educate that the main focus of MPI is the field of management, not religious teachers. In addition, competition with public campuses remains a challenge in competing for prospective students. The marketing strategies applied include:

- 1) Massive promotion: through the distribution of souvenirs and the direct involvement of lecturers in field socialization.
- 2) Alumni Empowerment: utilizing alumni as a living testimony through effective word of mouth.
- 3) Strategic Partnership: establishing cooperation with educational institutions as an internship place to provide practical experience for students.
- 4) Continuous evaluation: conducting periodic surveys every year of students and lecturers to identify service and academic weaknesses.

DISCUSSION

Dominance of Internal Factors and Managerial Career Orientation

The results of the study show that the preferences of STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh students in choosing the Islamic Education Management (MPI) study program are summarised by internal factors, especially pragmatic career orientation. The findings show that students choose the MPI Study Program because of the job opportunities that are considered wider than other teacher training study programs. Purely in line with the trend of shifting student motivation in the industrial era 4.0. Prospective students are now more likely to choose study programs that offer role flexibility in the job market, where MPI graduates are not only prepared to become educational practitioners, but also administrators and managers in various sectors of Islamic educational institutions.

This strengthens the research from Nurazizah et al. who stated that the attractiveness of study programs is highly dependent on how students perceive their future prospects after graduation. At STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh, the understanding that MPI graduates will be directed to become managerial personnel, not teachers, is a differentiator (*defferentiation strategy*) which is effective in attracting the interest of students who want to contribute to the world of education without having to teach in the classroom.

In his research (Arfanaldy, 2024) According to Hartati Sukirman in Mustari, education personnel are different from personnel (educational institution personnel). Educational institutions are educational implementing organizations and managing education providers. Education personnel include personnel in educational institutions, but not all personnel in educational institutions are called educational personnel. Education personnel are personnel who work in educational institutions or organizations who have educational insight (understanding philosophy and educational science), and carry out educational implementation activities (micro or macro) or the implementation of education.

In research (Affa & Mulyana, 2024) 7 relevant journals were found to be studied regarding the factors that affect career optimism. Based on the literature found, there are 5 factors that affect career optimism. Internal factors that affect career optimism are: self-efficacy, career orientation, and self-confidence. The external factors that affect career optimism are: social support and good career services.

Institutional Influence and Quality of Digital Services

Institutional factors emerged as a significant decision reinforcement, where STAIN's status as a State University (PTN) provides legitimacy and trust for the community in the West-South region of Aceh. However, in addition to formal status, the quality of digital

services through the Academic Information System (SIKAD) is a key variable in maintaining student loyalty.

The integration of technology in academic services is no longer just a complement, but a fundamental need. The responsive implementation of SIKAD at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng reflects the institution's adaptation to the needs of Generation Z which prioritizes speed and ease of access to information. This is relevant to the concept of modern education management which emphasizes that bureaucratic efficiency at the study program level directly contributes to the positive image of the institution in the eyes of students.

This is in line with research from (Hardyanti & Fauzi, 2024) which states that digital solutions are able to simplify the educational administration process. The existence of a web-based system such as SIKAD allows for service availability, reduces queues, and speeds up the time to complete administrative tasks. But challenges such as unstable internet connections are a major obstacle, especially during the KRS registration period, which requires better network capacity to handle user surgeries.

Supporting research by (Sonia & Muldrianto, t.t.) In an effort to improve quality, Mahad Aisyah has used SIKAD as a means of online learning, student attendance, employee attendance, procurement system, lecturer data and so on. This is intended to make it easier for all parties to use data and get fast, precise, and relevant information. This academic information system is used in teaching and learning activities and all sectors are directed to use it. This aims to ensure that there is no data confusion (data differences between existing sections or fields) and transparency in the management of higher education institutions. So that stakeholders can monitor the existing data at any time and see how the management of the institution is carried out. Existing data can also be used as a consideration for decisions by management, be it strategic decisions, development, or technical decisions.

Curriculum Innovation and Non-Thesis Graduation

Another interesting finding is the study program's strategic steps in innovating the curriculum in 2025 as well as the graduation path policy through the publication of scientific articles in reputable journals. This policy is an adaptive response to national policies regarding the transformation of national standards for higher education. Innovation of the graduation path without a thesis (for example through the publication of SINTA 4) can accelerate the study period and increase the scientific productivity of study programs collectively. This strategy is theoretically referred to as *Competitive Advantage*, where MPI STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh offers added value that is not necessarily possessed by private universities around it.

In line with the results of the research (Marwiji dkk., t.t.) The Independent Learning Independent Campus Curriculum (MBKM) is one of the main programs of the Ministry of Education and Culture which aims to encourage students to gain mastery of various sciences relevant to the world of work. The Independent Campus is a policy of the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim. One of the programs in the Independent Learning Independent Campus policy is the right of students to study for three semesters outside the study program. This program is implemented in accordance with the regulations and legal foundations of higher education to improve the quality of learning and university graduates.

Supporting research by (Arfanaldy, 2024) Quality assurance institutions, lecturers and teaching staff in universities also have an important role in the implementation of graduation

methods. They are responsible for providing guidance, supervision, and assessment to students during the thesis writing process or working on non-thesis final projects. Lecturers also have a role in ensuring that the graduation method applied is in accordance with the curriculum that has been prepared by the university. In this case, it is important for universities to provide sufficient training and support to lecturers in carrying out this task, so that an academic environment can be created that is conducive to achieving higher education goals.

The role and implementation of educational institution policies are considered quite important in the process of determining and implementing graduation methods, both thesis and non-scripture. Educational institution policies are internal guidelines and guidelines used by universities in establishing rules and procedures related to graduation methods. This policy covers various things, ranging from assessment criteria, procedures for submitting thesis titles or non-thesis final projects, to supervision and quality assurance mechanisms.

One of the important aspects of the policy of educational institutions, especially in higher education, is the availability of clear and detailed guidelines for students. This guideline must include complete information about the requirements that must be met, the procedures that must be followed, and the stages that must be passed in completing the thesis or non-thesis final project. By having clear guidelines, students will be better able to understand the expectations and demands that must be met, so that the graduation process can run more smoothly and transparently (Arfanaldy, 2024; Dong dkk., 2024).

Stigma Mitigation and Promotion Strategies through Alumni

Although student preferences are positive, this study reveals obstacles in the form of societal stigma that often equates MPI with Islamic Religious Education (PAI). To overcome this role ambiguity, alumni empowerment as "promotional agents" proved to be the most effective marketing communication institution.

Testimonials of the success of alumni who work in managerial positions provide real proof (*social proof*) for the public that the profile of MPI graduates has different specifications from religious teachers. A *mouth-to-mouth* communication strategy supported by alumni absorption data is the most relevant approach in the context of the West Aceh community which still strongly upholds communal values and social recommendations.

Empowering alumni bonds has proven to have a significant contribution in shaping public perception and attracting the interest of prospective new students. According to Prasetyo and Handayani (2023), *a well-managed track record and active involvement of alumni function as a branding agent* that empirically influences public preferences for a study program.

Research by (Fauzi dkk., 2022; Nur dkk., 2024) confirms that the accountability of a study program is no longer only measured by the fulfillment of internal standards, but by how *outcome data* (outputs) are communicated to the public. *Tracer study* is not just an administrative document for the purpose of accreditation, but a strategic instrument in *Integrated Marketing Communication*. Valid job absorption data, when integrated with narrative testimonials from alumni, will create a marketing message that is transparent, accountable, and has high bargaining power in the eyes of the public.

Perception, Quality of Service and Student Decision

Perception is a process that is preceded by sensing, which is a process that is tangible in the receipt of stimuli by individuals through sensory devices or also sensory processes. There are several opinions about perception, one of which is According to Sarwono "perception is the ability to distinguish, group, focus, and pay attention to an object". This opinion emphasizes that perception is a process that is initiated from vision to the formation of responses that occur in the individual so that the individual is aware of everything in his environment through the senses he has. (Mokodompit & Luneto, 2019)

It can be concluded from several experts that perception occurs because every human being has the sense to absorb objects and events around them. In the end, perception can affect the way a person thinks, works, and behaves. The perception referred to in this study is the ability to discriminate, group, focus, and pay attention to the perceived quality of academic services. The indicators of perception in this study were analyzed from: 1). Students' views on academic services to the study program, 2) knowing what factors make them choose the MPI study program, 3) the availability of students to invite others.

In Research (Yani & Kuswardani, 2021) The quality of service according to Wykof is the level of excellence expected and its control in order to meet customer expectations. While satisfaction is a feeling of disappointment or disappointment after comparing a product's performance with a customer's expectations, this customer satisfaction is highly dependent on the customer's own perception and expectations. If the performance is not in accordance with expectations, the customer will not be satisfied. In higher education, student satisfaction is obtained based on experience during the learning process, good service and with the fulfillment of expectations, students will feel satisfied (Agus R dkk., 2026; Imam Tabroni dkk., 2022).

Practical Experience Based Strategic Partnership (Internship/PLP)

The study program's steps in establishing strategic partnerships with various educational institutions as an internship locus or field work practice are a reinforcement of pragmatic student preferences. Today's students need the assurance that what they are learning theoretically can be implemented directly in the field. Through this partnership, MPI students get *experiential learning* in managing administration, budgeting, and leading Islamic education organizations in real terms, which at the same time opens up recruitment opportunities before they graduate.

These findings are in line with research (Granikov dkk., 2020; Khamidah & Nurcholis, 2026) The results of the study show that Field Work Practice (PKL) has a positive and significant effect on work readiness, this shows that direct work experience through street vendors is able to increase students' readiness to enter the world of work, although the effect is not as great as the motivation to enter the world of work. PKL contributes to improving students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and work values. Through street vendors, students gain a real understanding of work tasks and processes, develop technical and non-technical skills, and learn to adapt to the culture and professional demands in the work environment.

Agree with his research (Fajrin, 2025; Moris, 2025) The implementation of collaborative planning, as well as the implementation of learning outcomes-based learning outcomes (CP) and basic competencies (KD) that are aligned with industry needs,

emphasizes the relevance of the principles *link and match*. This is in line with the national policy of vocational education which places the synergy of schools and industry as the key to producing a competitive and adaptive workforce. In addition, this study also underlines the importance of continuous mentoring and strengthening work character as key factors for the success of street vendor programs. This process is carried out through reflective mechanisms, such as daily journal recording, periodic reports, and final presentations, which clearly encourage the formation of *soft skills*. Values such as effective communication, a sense of responsibility, and high adaptability are important provisions for students in building their professional profile in the future (Darwanto dkk., 2024).

The Industrial Revolution 4.0 era has changed the work culture of employees within companies. Employees no longer use paper-based, but have switched to digital-based. So employees must be able to cooperate and have their own initiative to advance the company. The work system of the Industry 4.0 era, said Adityanto, requires employees to have their own initiative on how to advance the company. Employees can not only use WA, Instrgram, or other social media. But employees are required to use social media to advance the company.

Continuous Evaluation Based on Internal Quality Assurance

The last point in this discussion is the existence of a continuous evaluation mechanism through annual surveys of students and lecturers to identify academic weaknesses. The Quality Culture implemented by the management of the MPI STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh study program ensures that every student complaint regarding facilities or services is immediately mitigated. This periodic evaluation maintains the level of total student satisfaction (Table 2: 0% expressed dissatisfaction) and encourages a high number of recommendations (64.3% agree to recommend MPI to others), which is the largest social capital of study programs to survive in the midst of inter-campus competition (Faizah, 2023; Wahyudin dkk., 2024).

In research (Supriyanto et al., 2024) by evaluating a program. Then it can be found out whether the goals of a program have been realized optimally or not. In the study, it is stated that program evaluation is carried out with the aim to: 1) show the program's contribution to the achievement of organizational goals, the results of this evaluation are important to develop the same program elsewhere, 2) make decisions about the sustainability of a program, whether the program needs to be continued, improved or stopped. Judging from the goal, which is to find out the condition of something, program evaluation can be said to be a form of evaluative research. Therefore, in program evaluation, the implementer thinks and determines the steps on how to carry out the research (Izzah dkk., 2024; Wahyudin dkk., 2024).

In program evaluation activities, there are several models. Evaluation models from one to the other do seem to vary, but the purpose and purpose are the same, namely to carry out data collection activities or information related to the object being evaluated. Furthermore, the information collected can be provided to decision-makers in order to accurately determine follow-up on the program that has been evaluated. Kaufman and Thomas (Harahap et al., 2024) namely: a. Goal Oriented Evaluation Model, b. Goal Free Evaluation Model, c. Formative Summative Evaluation Model, d. Countenance Evaluation Model, e. Responsive Evaluation Model, f. CSE-UCLA Evaluation Model, g. CIPP Evaluation

Model, and h. Discrepancy Model. The selection of the evaluation model to be used depends on the purpose of the evaluation. In the implementation of the evaluation of the student exchange program, the CIPP model will be used.

Internal evaluation and quality assurance are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The results of the research were greatly influenced by (Riyanto, 2026), in Nordin, 2026) emphasized that institutions that have an evaluative culture tend to be more consistent in improving the quality of education. Internal quality assurance allows the institution to make continuous improvements based on the results of the evaluation. Integration with external accreditation also provides independent validation of the quality of education. The study shows that the success of a quality assurance system depends on the commitment of all stakeholders, including teachers, management, and education regulators. A strong evaluative culture creates an educational system that is adaptive and responsive to change.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that students' preferences for the Islamic Education Management Study Program (MPI) at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh are in the positive category. Students' decisions in choosing this study program are influenced by personal, social, and institutional factors, with personal factors in the form of career orientation and job prospects as dominant factors. In addition, the quality of academic services, curriculum innovation, digitization of services through SIAKAD, and aluminum-based promotion strategies also strengthen the attractiveness of the study program. This research shows that the image of the institution, service quality, and promotion strategy are important elements in increasing student interest in the MPI Study Program.

Institutionally, the institution's status as a State University (PTN) combined with the quality of digital services through the implementation of a responsive Academic Information System (SIAKAD) has proven to be a key variable in maintaining student satisfaction and loyalty. This trust is strengthened by the adaptive steps of study program managers through curriculum innovation based on industrial dynamics and the provision of alternative non-thesis graduation paths through the publication of scientific articles in reputable journals (SINTA).

Despite being faced with obstacles in the form of societal stigma that equates the MPI study program with Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the study program has succeeded in mitigating these challenges through an *Integrated Marketing Strategy*. Empowering alumni bonds and utilizing valid *tracer study* data has proven to be effective in functioning as a *branding agent* and *social proof*. Communication from *word of mouth strategies* that have proven to be effective integrates real testimonials and proof of graduate job absorption into the most persuasive promotional instruments in forming positive perceptions and attracting the interest of prospective new students in a sustainable manner.

ADVICE

Based on the results of the research, there are several suggestions that can be given. First, the Islamic Education Management Study Program needs to continue to strengthen a promotional strategy that emphasizes the identity and distinctive advantages of MPI, especially related to the job prospects of graduates in the field of education management so

that the public no longer has a wrong perception of this study program.

Second, the study program needs to maintain and improve the quality of academic services, both in terms of facilities, lecturer quality, and the development of an academic digital system so that the level of student satisfaction is maintained and able to increase student loyalty to the institution.

Third, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation with alumni, schools, and other educational institutions as a form of promotion based on real experience and open internship and work experience opportunities for students so that they can increase the competitiveness of graduates in the world of work.

Fourth, further research is expected to expand the scope of research by involving other universities or using a more in-depth approach to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the factors that affect students' preferences in choosing study programs at Islamic religious universities.

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