intelektual
Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Keislaman
E-ISSN: 2685-4155

Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Keislaman
https://ejournal.uit-lirboyo.ac.id/index.php/intelektual
Volume 15 (2), 2025, 303-324
DOI: 10.33367/ji.v15i2.7876
Available Online: 2025-08-31

Aligning Students' Competencies with Global Workforce Standards: A Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) Perspective

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Received: 2025-07-18 Revised: 2025-08-21 Approved: 2025-08-25

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Abstract

This study examines UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri undergraduates' work-related competencies through the Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) lens. Recognizing that modern bachelor-level programs are increasingly geared toward employability, this evaluative field research employs Provus' DEM framework alongside a convergent mixed-methods design. Qualitative insights were gathered via interviews, observations, and document analyses, while quantitative data were obtained through a structured questionnaire. A total of 386 students from the PBA, IAT, and PAI programs participated. We adopted Spencer and Spencer's five-factor competency model to establish performance standards, motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills. The questionnaire, developed in collaboration with the Insight Yogyakarta Institute, set a benchmark of 87 points as the minimum acceptable score. The process phase measured student performance, revealing that 51.3% (n = 198) met or exceeded this threshold. Notable gaps emerged in motives (mean = 15.87) and skills (mean = 18.16), attributable to intense labor-market competition and a curriculum that insufficiently nurtures interpersonal and technical proficiencies. This study contributes to developing recommendations in the form of targeted interventions to improve students' work competencies, namely through motivational seminars and skill development workshops for students and pedagogical development programs for lecturers. This article has implications for enriching work competency theory, curriculum development strategies, and institutional evaluation design.

Keywords: Discrepancy Evaluation Model, Global Workforce, Student Competencies.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji kompetensi kerja mahasiswa sarjana UIN Syekh Wasil melalui kerangka kerja Model Evaluasi Ketidaksesuaian (DEM). Mengingat program sarjana modern semakin berorientasi pada keterserapan kerja, penelitian evaluatif lapangan ini menggunakan kerangka kerja DEM Provus bersama dengan desain campuran konvergen. Wawasan kualitatif dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, sementara data kuantitatif diperoleh melalui kuesioner terstruktur. Sebanyak 386 mahasiswa dari program PBA, IAT, dan PAI berpartisipasi. Kami mengadopsi model kompetensi lima faktor Spencer dan Spencer—motif, sifat, konsep diri, pengetahuan, dan keterampilan—untuk menetapkan standar kinerja. Kuesioner, yang dikembangkan bekerja sama dengan Insight Yogyakarta Institute, menetapkan ambang batas 87 poin sebagai skor minimum yang dapat diterima. Fase proses melibatkan pengukuran kinerja aktual mahasiswa, yang menunjukkan bahwa 51,3% (n = 198) memenuhi atau melebihi ambang batas tersebut. Celah yang mencolok muncul

pada motivasi (rata-rata = 15,87) dan keterampilan (rata-rata = 18,16), yang disebabkan oleh persaingan pasar tenaga kerja yang intens dan kurikulum yang kurang mengembangkan keterampilan interpersonal dan teknis. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada dihasilkannya rekomendasi berupa intervensi terarah untuk meningkatkan kompetensi kerja mahasiswa, yaitu melalui seminar motivasi dan lokakarya pengembangan keterampilan untuk mahasiswa, serta program pengembangan pedagogis untuk dosen. Artikel ini berdampak pada pengayaan teori kompetensi kerja, strategi pengembangan kurikulum, dan desain evaluasi kelembagaan.

Kata Kunci: Kompetensi Mahasiswa, Model Evaluasi Ketidaksesuaian, Tenaga Kerja Global.

Introduction

The dynamism of human civilization demands several changes to answer the educational needs of the current 5.0 era. The Japanese Government initiated the era of society 5.0 in anticipation of the dynamics of disruption stemming from the industrial revolution 4.0. That causes something difficult to predict, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).[1] Furthermore, these dynamics certainly significantly impact meeting the needs of the world of work in society.[2] In this case, it is only natural that higher education is required to prepare graduates who are competent in their fields.

In education, a paradigm shift is needed to welcome the era of society 5.0. One is about educators who must transform from being a source of learning to becoming an inspirer of creativity in students. It means an educator must be able to carry out the role of a facilitator and a tutor who can encourage students in the learning process. That is because the world of education is currently directed at producing a skilled generation.[3]

The Ministry of Education and Culture is also promoting the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (*MBKM*) in the Higher Education environment to answer the challenges and needs of the world of work. Students can study outside their study program for 3 semesters to facilitate their interests and talents outside the competencies of the study program taught for 5 semesters.[4] This policy is certainly in

[1] Atsushi Deguchi et al., "What Is Society 5.0?," in *Society 5.0: A People-Centric Super-Smart Society*, ed. Hitachi-UTokyo Laboratory (H-UTokyo Lab.) (Springer, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-2989-4.

[2] Maimunatun Habibah and Edi Nurhidin, "Profil Pelajar Dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Madrasah Di Era VUCA," *Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* 13, no. 2 (2023): 211–30, https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v13i2.4061.

[3] Yohanes Yakobus Werang Kean et al., "DARI ENDE UNTUK INDONESIA: LAWATAN SEJARAH DAERAH SEBAGAI SUMBER BELAJAR BAGI GENERASI MUDA," *HISTORIA : Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Sejarah* 6, no. 2 (2018): 2, https://doi.org/10.24127/hj.v6i2.1527.

[4] Harnida Wahyuni Adda et al., "Promoting Transformative Learning Through Independent-Study Campus (MBKM) in Higher Institutions During the COVID-19 Pandemic," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 14, no. 3 (2022): 3, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i3.1867.

line with the needs of the current world of work, which sometimes practically does not always require the linearity of diplomas.

The readiness of students to face the world of work is important to study, considering that the majority of studies at the undergraduate level today are oriented towards absorption in the world of work.[5] The output aspect, which also includes highlighting the performance of graduates, is the biggest side of the assessment weight in the study program accreditation instrument set, both by the *Badan Akreditasi Nasional Perguruan Tinggi* (*BAN-PT*) and the *Lembaga Akreditasi Mandiri* (*LAM*). The preparation of student competence at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri has been implemented through several programs, both in the scope of curricular and co-curricular activities. The competence of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students has never been studied in more detail, especially if it is associated with the standards that apply in the world of work in general. UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri, as a university, must be able to answer the needs of the world of work by preparing graduates who are competent in their fields.

Occupational competency standards usually refer to indicators that refer to a particular concept. In context, researchers cite the definition of Spencer & Spencer, who formulate competence as a characteristic that underlies a person and shows how they act, think, and generalize various conditions, which persist over a long period.[6] There are five elements of competence, including motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills.[7] Meanwhile, the dimensions of the competency scale include intensity/completeness of action, impact size, complexity, number of attempts, and unique dimensions.[8]

To evaluate the competency preparation of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students, researchers found that the Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) is the most relevant concept used as an analytical tool. DEM is an evaluation model initiated by Malcolm M. Provus, who originally intended to evaluate educational programs in the Pittsburgh

[5] Khaerul Aqbar, "Evaluasi Dan Pengembangan Capaian Kompetensi Lulusan Melalui Tracer Study," *Adaara: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (2021): 2, https://doi.org/10.35673/ajmpi.v11i2.2133; Tri Hanani and Sukirno Sukirno, "Evaluasi Kesiapan Kerja Mahasiswa Akuntansi Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta Menghadapi Era Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean (Mea) 2015," *Nominal Barometer Riset Akuntansi Dan Manajemen* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1, https://doi.org/10.21831/nominal.v5i1.11475; Eko Santoso and Muharsono Muharsono, "Evaluasi Kompetensi Dan Relevansi Lulusan Pada Dunia Kerja Dengan Tracer Study Di Universitas Tulungagung," *BENEFIT* 5, no. 1 (2018): 1.

[6] Lyle M. Spencer and Signe M. Spencer, *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance* (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1993), 9.

[7] Spencer and Spencer, *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance*, 10–11.

[8] Spencer and Spencer, *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance*, 21–22.

Public Schools. According to Provus, evaluation is looking at how a program performs against its standards, finding gaps in some aspects, and then using that information to identify weaknesses.[9] In short, DEM is an evaluation model focusing on the gap between performance standards and actual performance.[10] Therefore, researchers need to examine academically the input, process, and output aspects of preparing the competence of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students.

Prasandha and Utomo's research concluded that Teaching Campus Batch 1 students from UNS, UAD, and Udinus Semarang were skilled in explaining lessons. However, the ability to vary learning, guide discussions, and teach small groups is low.[11] Aqbar's research evaluated the competency achievements of STIBA Makassar alumni. The results showed that 71% were employed. In general, the competence of STIBA graduates is categorized as good and excellent. That was achieved thanks to learning methods during lectures involving hands-on learning patterns, field work, and discussions.[12]

Sukmawati's research analyzed the readiness of microteaching students of the mathematics study program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang. The results showed that students were ready to become professional teachers based on four existing competencies (including pedagogical, personality, professional, and social competencies).[13] Santoso and Muharsono's research evaluated the competence and relevance of Tulungagung University graduates to the world of work. As a result, 81% of respondents were employed, and 71% stated they worked in their field. This search utilizes the tracer study function at the university.[14]

Research by Hanani and Sukirno evaluated the work readiness of UNY Accounting students in 2016. The results show that 73.46% of students are ready to work in the ethical aspect, 75.93% of students are prepared to work from the perspective of knowledge competence, 59.26% are ready to work from the capability aspect, 67.9%

[9] Malcolm M. Provus, *The Discrepancy Evaluation Model: An Approach to Local Program Improvement and Development* (Pittsburgh Public Schools, 1969), https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED030957.
[10] M. Provus, "Evaluation as Public Policy," *Curriculum Theory Network* 3, nos. 8–9 (1972): 33–44, world, https://doi.org/10.1080/00784931.1972.11075703.
[11] Diyamon Prasandha and Asep Purwo Yudi Utomo, "Evaluasi Keterampilan Dasar Mengajar Mahasiswa Dalam Program Kampus Mengajar Angkatan 1 Tahun 2021," *Jurnal Sastra Indonesia* 11, no. 1 (2022): 1, https://doi.org/10.15294/jsi.v11i1.55441.
[12] Aqbar, "Evaluasi Dan Pengembangan Capaian Kompetensi Lulusan Melalui Tracer Study."
[13] Rika Sukmawati, "Analisis kesiapan mahasiswa menjadi calon guru profesional berdasarkan standar kompetensi pendidik," *Jurnal Analisa* 5, no. 1 (2019): 1, https://doi.org/10.15575/ja.v5i1.4789.
[14] Santoso and Muharsono, "Evaluasi Kompetensi Dan Relevansi Lulusan Pada Dunia Kerja Dengan Tracer Study Di Universitas Tulungagung."

are prepared from the standpoint of respect for values and human rights, and 69.14% are prepared from the perspective of analysis.[15] From several existing studies, researchers found some research that alluded to the work readiness of students or graduates in several universities. However, no previous research has used the Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) as a review tool. Therefore, this research offers novelty in using DEM to analyze student competencies.

Method

This research is a type of program evaluation using Provus's Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) paradigm. The evaluation includes input, process, and output aspects.[16] Researchers identified work competency standards in the input aspect and then compiled a work competency questionnaire. In the process aspect, researchers measured students' actual performance, identified gaps, and analyzed the factors causing the gaps. In the output aspect, researchers recommend corrective actions to overcome the gaps. The visualization of the DEM conducted can be seen in the following chart:

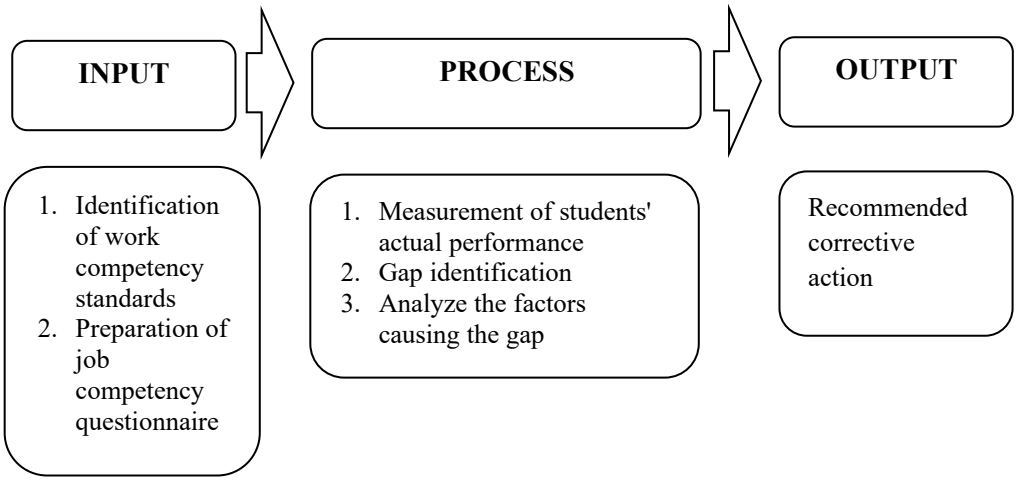

Figure 1. Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) Pathway

This study was conducted at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri, with a population of 2,106 students from three study programs that have received superior accreditation (read: *Unggul*) from LAMDIK (*Lembaga Akreditasi Mandiri Kependidikan*), including the Arabic Language Education Study Program (PBA, 459 people), the Qur'anic

[15] Hanani and Sukirno, "Evaluasi Kesiapan Kerja Mahasiswa Akuntansi Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta Menghadapi Era Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean (Mea) 2015."
[16] Malcolm Provus, "Evaluation of Ongoing Programs in the Public School Systems," in *Educational Evaluation: Theory and Practice*, ed. Blaine R. Worthen and James R. Sanders (Charles A. Jones Publishing Company, 1981), 175.

Science and Interpretation Study Program (IAT, 448 people), and the Islamic Religious Education Study Program (PAI, 1,199 people). Based on the calculation of Slovin's formula, the sample of this study amounted to 386 students. With the proportionate random sampling technique, the details of the number of samples from each study program can be mapped as follows:

Table 1. Distribution of Research Samples

No.	Study Program	Number of Students	Proportions
1.	PBA	84	21,80%
2.	IAT	82	21,27%
3.	PAI	220	56,93%
	Total	**386**	**100%**

A mixed method with a convergent design was optimized for data collection. Qualitative data was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. Meanwhile, quantitative data were collected through questionnaires. The researcher collected qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously, analyzed them separately, and then combined the results. Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles-Huberman-Saldana, which includes data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.[17] The number-based data is analyzed with a descriptive-quantitative paradigm to make it more measurable.[18] The data in question is mainly related to the actual performance of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students based on the concept of Spencer & Spencer.

Results and Discussion

In evaluating the work competence of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students, researchers used Provus' Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) paradigm framework, which includes aspects of input, process, and output.[19] Researchers identified work competency standards in the input aspect and then compiled a work competency questionnaire. In the process aspect, researchers measured students' actual performance, identified gaps, and analyzed the factors causing the gaps. In the output aspect, researchers recommended corrective actions to overcome the gaps.

[17] Matthew B. Miles et al., *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 3rd ed. (SAGE Publications, 2014).
[18] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*, 4th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2013).
[19] Provus, "Evaluation of Ongoing Programs in the Public School Systems," 175.

DOI: 10.33367/ji.v15i2.7876

Input Students' Work Competence: A Multidimensional Perspective

This research utilizes Spencer & Spencer's job competency model, which summarizes five main characteristics: motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills.[20] These characteristics link individual qualities with superior performance based on empirical analysis of thousands of jobs in various sectors. Simultaneously, the research also incorporated the dimensions of work competence from the "Insight Yogyakarta" Institute, which highlights intelligence, supporting intelligence, work attitude, and personality as indicators of student success in facing the challenges of the world of work.[21] Combining these two models offers a comprehensive approach to measuring student competencies.

Table 2. Work Competence According to Spencer & Spencer and the "Insight Yogyakarta" Institute

No.	Source	Aspects of Work Competence	Notes
1.	Spencer & Spencer Theory	1. Motives 2. Traits 3. Self-Concept 4. Knowledge 5. Skills	There are 16 sub-indicators derived from these five aspects
2.	Insight Yogyakarta Institute	1. Intelligence 2. Supporting Intelligence 3. Work Attitude 4. Personality	There are 15 sub-indicators derived from these four aspects

Table 2 shows a comparison of work competency aspects based on Spencer & Spencer's theory (5 aspects) and the instruments used by the "Insight Yogyakarta" Institute (4 aspects). According to Ningrum, the work competency dimensions used at the Insight Yogyakarta Institute have been compiled through various relevant studies to obtain objective parameters. That is why formal institutions widely trust the institute to measure the work competencies of their students or graduates in the workplace.[22]

The researchers and co then synthesized and included favorable and unfavorable statements in each indicator. That was done so that the questionnaire could objectively measure students' work competencies. Based on these considerations, the following list of work competency questionnaire statements was compiled:

[20] Spencer and Spencer, *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance*, 10–11.
[21] Documentation, the “Insight Yogyakarta” Institute Work Competence Instrument.
[22] Interview, Debri Setia Ningrum, PiC of the “Insight Yogyakarta” Institute, September 26, 2024.

Table 3. Work Competency Questionnaire Statements

Aspects	Indicators	Item	
		Favorable	**Unfavorable**
Motives	Drive to achieve	I always strive to achieve the best results in every task I undertake.	I rarely feel motivated to complete tasks with satisfactory results.
	Drive to succeed	I feel motivated to achieve my career goals successfully.	I don't care about my work's results as long as the task is completed.
	Consistency of behavior	I consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic in every situation.	I often change the way I complete my work.
Traits	Self-confidence	I am confident in completing the tasks assigned to me.	I often feel unsure of my ability to perform my tasks.
	Perseverance	I remain focused and work hard even when faced with challenges.	I give up easily when faced with difficulties at work.
	Flexibility	I easily adapt to changes in the work environment.	I find it challenging to adapt to changes in the workplace.
Self-Concept	Role-related self-confidence	I am confident that I can perform my role well in the workplace.	I feel unsure whether I can fulfill my role at work.
	Identification with job values	The work I do is in line with my personal values	I feel that my work does not reflect the values I hold dear.
	Positive self-image	I have a positive outlook on my ability to complete tasks	I often feel that I am less capable than my coworkers.
Knowledge	Technical/specific knowledge	I deeply understand the techniques and procedures required in my job.	I often lack understanding of the techniques and procedures required for my tasks.
	Conceptual understanding	I have a good understanding of the concepts relevant to my field of work	I feel that I lack an understanding of the important concepts required in my work.
	Analytical skills	I can analyze complex situations and find the right solutions	I often have difficulty analyzing complex problems.
Skills	Analytical thinking	I can quickly analyze information and make effective decisions	I often find it difficult to analyze information and make decisions.
	Problem solving	I can find effective solutions when faced with problems	I often have difficulty finding solutions to the problems I face.
	Interpersonal skills	I can communicate well and collaborate with colleagues	I find it difficult to communicate and collaborate with others at work.
	Technical skills	I have the technical skills required to perform my job duties effectively	I often feel that I lack the technical skills needed for my work.

In Islamic higher education, student competence includes technical expertise and moral integrity.[23] Adjusting the competency model with Islamic values is relevant to form graduates who can contribute professionally and ethically.[24] This combination of theoretical elements emphasizes the importance of objective evaluation standards in producing competent and valuable graduates.

The questionnaire has been structured into 32 statements, integrating both favorable and unfavorable items, designed to increase the objectivity of data collection. Previously, similar studies have emphasized that questionnaires with this format can reduce bias and improve data reliability.[25] This technique ensures that the results reflect actual work competencies. As a reference for the criteria for success in evaluating the work competence of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students, the researcher used the following passing grade calculation:

$$\textit{Passing Grade} = \text{Md} + (¼ \times \text{SD})$$

Notes:

Md = Median (Median value of the maximum questionnaire score)
= ½ x 160
= 80

SD = Standard Deviation
= 1/3 x Md
= 1/3 x 80
= 26,67

With these two provisions, then:

Passing Grade = Md + (¼ x SD)
= 80 + (¼ x 26,67)
= 80 + 6,67
= 86,67
= 87

Competency standards with a passing grade of 87 indicate a focus on actual performance as an indicator of competency. The score-based assessment system helps identify student competency gaps quantitatively. This model draws on the occupational

[23] Muhamad Nawawi and Rusi Rusmiati Aliyyah, "Transformasi Pendidikan Tinggi Menuju Kualitas Dan Profesionalisme," *Karimah Tauhid* 3, no. 2 (2024): 2374–90, https://doi.org/10.30997/karimahtauhid.v3i2.12055.

[24] Ali Miftakhu Rosyad and Muhammad Anas Maarif, "PARADIGMA PENDIDIKAN DEMOKRASI DAN PENDIDIKAN ISLAM DALAM MENGHADAPI TANTANGAN GLOBALISASI DI INDONESIA," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2020): 1, https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v3i1.491.

[25] Fernando Fierro et al., "Behavioral Workplace Competencies: Analyzing a Competency Model for Private Companies," *TEM Journal* 10, no. 2 (2021): 777–88, https://doi.org/10.18421/TEM102-35.

competency approach developed by various competency studies that emphasize the importance of outcome-based measurement.[26]

The merging of the Spencer & Spencer model with Insight Yogyakarta reflects a multidimensional approach to assessing student competence. While Spencer & Spencer focuses more on the intrinsic character of the individual, Insight Yogyakarta adds the dimension of social and professional environment relevant to personality development. Such a multidimensional combination is relevant for evaluating students' employability competencies in a broader spectrum.[27] The implementation of passing grades utilizes data analysis to identify competency levels. This data-driven model ensures fair, consistent, and reliable evaluation, aligning with global higher education evaluation standards.[28]

Student competencies, as defined in the model, directly correlate with employment opportunities in the global market. Studies show that combining knowledge, skills, and individual characteristics influences graduates' competitiveness in a multicultural work environment. However, implementing this model faces challenges, including the need for instructor training and curriculum adaptation to cover all competency indicators. In addition, further studies are needed to adapt this model to the specific needs of the local job market.

This research offers a framework for Islamic higher education to balance academic and ethical aspects, leading students to become excellent and socially responsible professionals. The integration of Islamic values into competency development characterizes this approach. The results of this study can serve as a guide in formulating academic policies at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri. By applying indicator-based competency evaluation and passing grades, educational institutions can improve the quality of their graduates. Further research is recommended to test the reliability of this questionnaire in various other Islamic education contexts.

[26] Ester Bernadó and Florian Bratzke, "Revisiting EntreComp through a Systematic Literature Review of Entrepreneurial Competences. Implications for Entrepreneurship Education and Future Research," *The International Journal of Management Education* 22, no. 3 (2024): 101010, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2024.101010.

[27] Peyman G. P. Sabet and Elaine Chapman, "A Window to the Future of Intercultural Competence in Tertiary Education: A Narrative Literature Review," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 96 (September 2023): 101868, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101868.

[28] Rebecca J. Collie, "Perceived Social-Emotional Competence: A Multidimensional Examination and Links with Social-Emotional Motivation and Behaviors," *Learning and Instruction* 82 (December 2022): 101656, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2022.101656.

The Process of Analyzing the Job Competency Gap of Students

After the work competency standards were established, the researchers distributed questionnaires to all respondents in this study, consisting of 386 students from the PBA, IAT, and PAI study programs at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri. The researchers measured actual performance based on the respondents' answers to determine whether there was a gap. An overview of the actual performance scores of students from the questionnaires completed by the respondents can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Student's Actual Performance Scores

No.	Study Program	Number of Students with Actual Performance Scores Above the Passing Grade	Number of Respondents in the Same Study Program	Percentage of the Total Number of Respondents in Each Study Program	Percentage of the Total Number of Respondents
1.	PBA	54	84	64,28%	13,99%
2.	IAT	41	82	50%	10,62%
3.	PAI	103	220	45,82%	26,68%
	Total	**198**	386		**51,29%**

Furthermore, the researchers then identified gaps in each aspect of work competence. As a basis for gap analysis, the researchers established Gap Justification Standards using the same calculation as the previous passing grade (Md + [¼ x SD]). For the questionnaire aspect with a maximum score of 30 (applicable to the motives, traits, self-concept, and knowledge aspects), a score of 17 was obtained. Meanwhile, for the questionnaire aspect with a maximum score of 40 (applicable to the skill aspect), a score of 22 was obtained. Based on these references, the results of the gap analysis of the work competencies of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students can be mapped as follows:

Table 5. Work Competency Gap Analysis

Aspects	Maximum Actual Score	Justification Standard	Actual Average Score	Gap Analysis
Motives	30	17	15,87	The Actual Average Score is less than the Justification Standard (1,13 points = 6,65%)
Traits	30	17	23,34	The Actual Average Score is above the justification standard
Self-concept	30	17	19,96	The Actual Average Score is above the justification standard
Knowledge	30	17	24,12	The Actual Average Score is above the justification standard
Skills	40	22	18,16	The Actual Average Score is less than the Justification Standard (3,84 points = 17,45%)

The competency gap in higher education is a global concern, especially concerning the readiness of graduates to face the increasingly competitive job market. An analysis of questionnaire results at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri showed that while 51.29% of students were considered competent and ready to work (according to Table 4), aspects of motives (15,87) and skills (18,16) recorded lower actual scores than expected. That means there is a 6,65% gap in the Motives aspect and a 17,45% gap in the Skills aspect (according to Table 5). Identification of causal factors, such as intense competition in the workplace[29] and limited exploration of interpersonal and technical skills in the lecture process,[30] is key to understanding this phenomenon.

To ensure the accuracy of this information, the researchers confirmed it by directly observing how the lectures were conducted by senior lecturers in the three study programs. In the PBA study program, the researcher observed that some classes taught by senior lecturers, particularly for theoretical courses such as *Ta'lim al-Arabiyah al-Mukassaf* and *al-Madkhal ila 'Ilmi al-Lughah*, were indeed more focused on direct learning, where lecturers primarily delivered the material throughout most of the lecture period.[31]

The same thing was also found in the IAT study program. Researchers observed the lecture process included in the Course category, such as *Madzahib al-Tafsir* and *Ushul al-Tafsir*. Although there were discussions and presentations in class, the lecturers, especially the seniors, explained the existing concepts more theoretically than exploring students' opinions.[32]

Similarly, in the PAI program, a similar phenomenon occurs. Researchers observed theoretical lectures such as Science of Islamic Education and *Hadith Tarbawi*. At times, students are encouraged to interact through brief question-and-answer sessions. However, most tend to listen to the lecturer's explanations rather than actively construct their understanding.[33]

[29] Interview, SA, Students at PBA Study Program, September 27, 2024. Researchers also found a similar response, whereby students felt that job opportunities in their field of study were limited. Interview, F, Students at IAT Study Program, September 30, 2024. Interview, NF, Students at PAI Study Program, October 1, 2024.
[30] Interview, Y, Students at PBA Study Program, October 2, 2024. Researcher also found that some lecturers conducted one-way lectures, resulting in students' skills not being sufficiently sharpened. Interview, RH, Students at IAT Study Program, October 2, 2024. Interview, AQ, Students at PAI Study Program, October 2, 2024.
[31] Observation, Lecture Process in the PBA Study Program, October 3, 2024.
[32] Observation, Lecture Process in the IAT Study Program, October 4, 2024.
[33] Observation, Lecture Process in the PAI Study Program, October 7, 2024.

The skills gap phenomenon in Indonesia is parallel to the rest of the world. The Amarathunga et al. report shows that universities in various countries face challenges in integrating soft skills such as communication, leadership, and teamwork into the higher education curriculum. This issue becomes critical in the era of society 5.0, where the need for transversal skills is increasing.[34]

The motives aspect reflects students' internal drive to achieve professional goals. Based on Calonge and Shah's study, the lack of attention to developing students' intrinsic motivation in a global context is often attributed to traditional learning methods that tend to ignore strengthening work orientation through project-based learning or internship work.[35]

Technical and interpersonal skills are highlighted in this analysis. Erdt et al. highlight that the mismatch between graduates' skills and the needs of the global labor market often prolongs the transition from education to work. An emphasis on work-integrated learning programs can help bridge this gap.[36]

Curricula in higher education are often considered less adaptive to industry needs. Amarathunga et al. suggest integrating sustainability and entrepreneurship-based approaches to upskill graduates in line with global demand.[37] That aligns with the need for curriculum transformation based on collaboration between universities and industry. The complexity of the modern job market adds pressure on students. According to studies on global platforms such as MOOCs, flexibility in technology-based learning can address some challenges by providing access to the required skills.[38]

Implementing a multidimensional approach, such as strengthening internship programs, developing real problem-based modules, and integrating adaptive learning technologies, can be a long-term solution. The results suggest the need for synergy between the faculty and the career development center in identifying industry needs regularly. The competency gap among UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students indicates the

[34] Buddhini Amarathunga et al., "Graduate Employability Skills, Trending Avenues and Research Gaps: A Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis," *Asian Education and Development Studies* 13, no. 4 (2024): 320–39, world, https://doi.org/10.1108/AEDS-04-2024-0085.

[35] David Santandreu Calonge and Mariam Aman Shah, "MOOCs, Graduate Skills Gaps, and Employability: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Literature," *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning: IRRODL* 17, no. 5 (2016): 67–90, https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v17i5.2675.

[36] Mojisola Erdt et al., "Evaluating Recommender Systems for Technology Enhanced Learning: A Quantitative Survey," *IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies* 8, no. 4 (2015): 326–44, https://doi.org/10.1109/TLT.2015.2438867.

[37] Amarathunga et al., "Graduate Employability Skills, Trending Avenues and Research Gaps."

[38] David Santandreu Calonge et al., "MOOCs and Upskilling in Australia: A Qualitative Literature Study," *Cogent Education* 6, no. 1 (2019): 1–19, world, https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1687392.

need to adjust educational strategies, especially in strengthening motivation and interpersonal skills. The global study provides a roadmap for implementing evidence-based policies relevant to national and international needs.

Output of Work Competence of Students

The researchers found gaps in motives and skills based on the results of the analysis. To address these gaps, scheduling several productive and relevant activities for students and lecturers is necessary. That is an objective idea, because these gaps may arise due to internal factors within the students themselves, or external factors from the lecturers teaching the courses.

Researchers explored the activities that students wanted to address the existing gaps. MA, a student from the PBA study program, stated that motivational seminars featuring experts in Arabic language education and training in the use of relevant applications or digital media for Arabic language instruction should be organized.[39] In the IAT study program, researchers received similar expectations from students. According to MR, public speaking training and digital interpretation software can develop students' interpersonal and technical skills.[40] Meanwhile, from the PAI study program, ChA stated that she felt the need for motivational seminars, classroom management workshops, and teaching skill development.[41]

Researchers also explored how lecturers view the stagnation of the current teaching process, where students often feel they are not actively involved. Most lecturers do not use technology optimally, let alone develop students' interpersonal and technical skills. MAF, a PBA study program lecturer, said workshops should be held on optimizing the use of IT and AI in teaching.[42]

IM, a lecturer from the IAT program, expressed a similar view. The technological dimension must be integrated to prevent the teaching process from becoming monotonous. According to him, interpretation lectures that use modern approaches, such as multimedia, digital interpretation applications, and online discussions, can provide students with a richer and more interesting learning experience.

[39] Interview, MA, Students at PBA Study Program, October 16, 2024.
[40] Interview, MR, Students at IAT Study Program, October 17, 2024.
[41] Interview, MR, Students at PAI Study Program, October 18, 2024.
[42] Interview, MAF, Lecturers at PBA Study Program, October 1, 2024.

Therefore, it is necessary to hold workshops to improve lecturers' skills, especially in the use of the latest technology to support lectures.[43]

Meanwhile, several constructive suggestions are worth discussing in the PAI program. According to MZF, developing teaching competencies is very important, especially when using technology and varying teaching methods. Students are more interested and easily engaged in this digital age if learning incorporates relevant technology. There is hope about using more digital media in teaching, such as apps for learning fiqh, aqidah, and Islamic history, or using videos and interactive platforms to enrich their learning experience.[44] From these findings, researchers can map out recommendations for activities that can be carried out to address the competency gap among students, as follows:

Table 6. Recommended Actions Based on Causes

Aspects	Causes	Recommended Actions
Motives	Intense competition in the workplace Limited job opportunities	1. Motivational seminars led by experts in Arabic language education to boost students' interest and guide their career direction. 2. Specialized public speaking training (in Arabic and/or the language of instruction) to strengthen interpersonal skills. 3. Workshops on using apps and digital media for language teaching and interpretation, with hands-on practice. 4. Training in digital interpretation software, including practical exercises and case studies. 5. Introductory teaching skill development sessions for students interested in teaching (microteaching).
Skills	Limited exploration of interpersonal and technical skills in the lecture process, and lecturers' limitations in using the latest technology during lectures	1. Workshops on optimizing the use of IT and AI in teaching, covering tool integration and creating interactive materials. 2. Multimedia instructional design training: producing instructional videos, interactive quizzes, and digital modules. 3. Modern classroom management training that encourages active student participation (discussion strategies, peer instruction). 4. Training on using discipline-specific applications (e.g., apps for fiqh, aqidah, and Islamic history) and integrating them into assessment.

[43] Interview, MAF, Lecturers at IAT Study Program, October 2, 2024.
[44] Interview, MZF, Lecturers at PAI Study Program, October 4, 2024.

The work competence of graduates is an important indicator in measuring the success of educational institutions, especially in the context of the society 5.0 era. Studies show that these competencies include knowledge, skills, and attitudes that conform to professional standards. UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri, committed to integrating Islamic education and modernity, needs to develop effective strategies to bridge the gap between the needs of the working world and student learning outcomes.

Student motivation plays a crucial role in shaping work readiness. Research at various universities shows that motivation and practical experience, such as internships, contribute significantly to students' readiness to enter the workforce. Motivational seminars and soft skills training are practical, strategic steps in building students' confidence and mental readiness.[45]

Moreover, collaboration with colleagues and the surrounding environment is one of the effective strategies in improving motivation and interpersonal aspects.[46] Competency workshops offer opportunities for students to hone their technical and interpersonal skills. For example, problem-solving-based training has enhanced students' ability to solve real-world problems while strengthening their adaptability to changes in the work environment.[47] However, students' well-developed technical skills will improve their future work competence.[48]

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[45] Eka Nurwidi Astuti and Muhtadin Amri, "Pengaruh Efikasi Diri, Motivasi Kerja, Dan Pengalaman Magang Terhadap Kesiapan Kerja Mahasiswa FEBI IAIN Ponorogo," *Niqosiya: Journal of Economics and Business Research* 4, no. 1 (2024): 1, https://doi.org/10.21154/niqosiya.v4i01.3193; Andi Muhammad Ikhsan Mustari, "PENGARUH PENGALAMAN MAGANG DAN MINAT KERJA TERHADAP KESIAPAN KERJA (Studi Pada Mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Universitas Brawijaya)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa FEB* 9, no. 2 (2020), https://jimfeb.ub.ac.id/index.php/jimfeb/article/view/7270; Ariestya Putri Pambajeng et al., "Pengaruh Pengalaman Magang, Motivasi Kerja, Dan Soft Skill Terhadap Kesiapan Kerja Mahasiswa Dalam Memasuki Dunia Kerja," *Journal of Economic, Bussines and Accounting (COSTING)* 7, no. 2 (2024): 2864–75, https://doi.org/10.31539/costing.v7i2.7338; Herlisa Setiarini et al., "PENGARUH SOFT SKILL DAN PENGALAMAN MAGANG KERJA TERHADAP KESIAPAN KERJA MAHASISWA MELALUI MOTIVASI KERJA SEBAGAI VARIABEL INTERVENING (STUDI KASUS PADA MAHASISWA FEB UNIVERSITAS PGRI SEMARANG)," *EKOBIS : Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen Dan Akuntansi* 10, no. 2 (2022): 195–204, https://doi.org/10.36596/ekobis.v10i2.941.

[46] Sandra Fischer-Schöneborn and Timo Ehmke, "Evaluating Boundary-Crossing Collaboration in Research-Practice Partnerships in Teacher Education: Empirical Insights on Co-Construction, Motivation, Satisfaction, Trust, and Competence Enhancement," *Studies in Educational Evaluation* 79 (December 2023): 101305, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2023.101305; Yuliya Shymko and Theodore A. Khoury, "From Community Rootedness to Individuated Entrepreneuring: The Development of Entrepreneurial Motivation through a Temporary Community of Practice," *Journal of Business Venturing* 38, no. 3 (2023): 106300, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2023.106300.

[47] Jhonattan Miranda et al., "The Core Components of Education 4.0 in Higher Education: Three Case Studies in Engineering Education," *Computers & Electrical Engineering* 93 (July 2021): 107278, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compeleceng.2021.107278; Peter Twigg et al., "Workshop Problem-Solving for Improved Student Engagement and Increased Learning in Engineering Control," *International Journal of Electrical Engineering & Education* 55, no. 2 (2018): 120–29, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020720918756258; Inga Žalėnienė and Paulo Pereira, "Higher Education For

As the main driving force in the educational process, lecturers must increase innovation in teaching methods. An interactive approach integrating theory with practice can improve learning effectiveness while inspiring students to develop professional skills. Moreover, AI-based technology is widely used and can be optimized for learning.[49] Lecturers, at this time, must also continue to improve their competence, mainly so that students are always actively involved in the learning process.

Evaluation results in various institutions show that the balance between strengthening academic aspects and developing soft skills is key in improving student work readiness.[50] UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri could adopt a holistic approach, such as integrating mandatory internships with project-based learning. The ideal work competencies for graduates of Islamic universities include technical aspects and professional ethics based on Islamic values. Strengthening Islamic personalities can be a competitive advantage for UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri graduates in the face of global competition.

The gap analysis shows that there is a need to strengthen the mastery of specific skills that are relevant to industry demands. Interventions in the form of needs-based training and collaboration with industry can be a promising solution.[51] Internship

Sustainability: A Global Perspective," *Geography and Sustainability* 2, no. 2 (2021): 99–106, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geosus.2021.05.001.

[48] Laeli Zzakiyah and Zaenal Arifin, "Strategi Pembelajaran Satu Mahasiswa Satu Karya Terhadap Keterampilan Menulis Mahasiswa," *Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* 14, no. 1 (2024): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v14i1.4850. See also Anis Rofi Hidayah et al., "Portfolio Assessment Strategies to Improve Prospective Teacher Competency in Islamic Religious Education Learning," *Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* 15, no. 1 (2025): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v15i1.6464.

[49] Verónica Basilotta-Gómez-Pablos et al., "Teachers' Digital Competencies in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review," *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 19, no. 1 (2022): 8, https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-021-00312-8; Héctor Galindo-Domínguez et al., "Relationship between Teachers' Digital Competence and Attitudes towards Artificial Intelligence in Education," *International Journal of Educational Research* 126 (January 2024): 102381, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2024.102381; Víctor J. García-Morales et al., "The Transformation of Higher Education After the COVID Disruption: Emerging Challenges in an Online Learning Scenario," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (February 2021): 1–6, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.616059; Tareq Rasul et al., "The Role of ChatGPT in Higher Education: Benefits, Challenges, and Future Research Directions," *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching* 6, no. 1 (2023): 1–16, https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2023.6.1.29.

[50] James E. Rebele and E. Kent St. Pierre, "A Commentary on Learning Objectives for Accounting Education Programs: The Importance of Soft Skills and Technical Knowledge," *Journal of Accounting Education* 48 (September 2019): 71–79, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaccedu.2019.07.002; Irene Spada et al., "Are Universities Ready to Deliver Digital Skills and Competences? A Text Mining-Based Case Study of Marketing Courses in Italy," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 182 (September 2022): 121869, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.121869.

[51] Oong Komar et al., "Need-Based Training Planning for PKBM Managers in Cimahi City during the Covid-19 Pandemic," *AIP Conference Proceedings* 2679, no. 1 (2023): 070023, https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0127604; Julianna Nielsen et al., "The Indigenous Work-Integrated Learning Resource Hub: A Needs-Based Approach to Addressing Barriers and Opportunities for Indigenous

programs contribute significantly to students' work readiness. Through internships, students can apply theory to practice, develop professional networks, and strengthen their understanding of work dynamics.

Strategies for improving work competencies must be integral to educational policy at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri. Implementing an adaptive curriculum based on work needs is essential in optimizing the competitiveness of graduates. Improving the work competence of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri students requires a systematic approach, including strengthening motivation, skills, and professional ethics. Collaboration between the institution, the industrial world, and the academic community can ensure graduates have optimal readiness to contribute to a dynamic and competitive global society.

Conclusion

The evaluation of UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri's student work competency input begins with identifying standards. Student competency standards were determined based on the concept of Spencer & Spencer, which includes motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills. Then, the work competency questionnaire was developed collaboratively, involving the "Insight Yogyakarta" Institute as a partner. Students' actual performance was measured through a questionnaire. The results showed that 51.29% of students (198 people) were categorized as competent and ready to face the world of work. Gaps were identified in motives (average actual score = 15.87) and skills (average actual score = 18.16). The discrepancy was caused by the tight competition in the workplace and the lecture process that did not explore students' interpersonal and technical skills.

The output evaluation resulted in several improvement strategies based on the gap analysis results. Activities need to be scheduled for students and lecturers to overcome the gap in motivation and skills. Relevant activities aimed at students are motivational seminars, public speaking, and microteaching, plus hands-on digital media and interpretation software workshops. At the same time, lecturers can participate in activities such as workshops on IT/AI integration, multimedia instructional design, modern classroom management, and discipline-specific app use. This study is limited to

Students," *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning* 23, no. 2 (2022): 139–52; Joko Sutarto et al., "Student Needs-Oriented E-Training Model In Society Era 5.0," *Webology* 19, no. 2 (2022): 2970–83.

a single institution. Therefore, further research on a larger scale is needed to obtain more comprehensive results.

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