

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY IN ISLAMIC AND STATE UNIVERSITIES: A Comparative Study in Indonesia

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Received: 30-01-2025; Revised: 22-03-2025; Accepted: 17-05-2025; Published regularly: June 2025

Abstract: This study explores strategies to enhance graduate employability in Indonesia's Islamic-based universities and state universities. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with university managers, lecturers, students, and alumni, supported by documentation studies and participatory observations. Thematic coding and data triangulation were used to analyze the data, ensuring the depth and validity of findings. The results reveal distinct institutional approaches: Islamic universities emphasize character development and work ethics rooted in spiritual values through programs like *tahfiz*-based leadership training and religious mentoring, while state universities focus on strengthening technical competencies and industry networks through structured internships and career development centers. Despite these differences, both institutions actively align higher education with labor market needs. This research contributes to the theoretical discourse on employability by introducing a new conceptual framework that integrates spiritual values with professional skills. The framework includes three core components: values-based curriculum integration, collaborative industry engagement, and holistic graduate profiling. These findings offer insights for policymakers and educators in developing inclusive and contextually relevant higher education models in pluralistic societies.

Keywords: graduate competitiveness; Islamic university; State University; job readiness; higher education; academic contribution

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi peningkatan daya saing lulusan di perguruan tinggi berbasis Islam dan perguruan tinggi negeri di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan pimpinan universitas, dosen, mahasiswa, dan alumni, serta didukung oleh studi dokumentasi dan observasi partisipatif. Analisis data dilakukan melalui teknik pengkodean tematik dan triangulasi untuk menjamin kedalaman dan validitas temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya pendekatan kelembagaan yang berbeda: perguruan tinggi Islam menekankan pada pembentukan karakter dan etos kerja yang berlandaskan nilai-nilai spiritual melalui program seperti pelatihan kepemimpinan berbasis *tahfiz* dan pembinaan keagamaan, sedangkan perguruan tinggi negeri lebih menitikberatkan pada penguatan kompetensi teknis dan jaringan profesional melalui program magang terstruktur dan pusat pengembangan karier. Meskipun memiliki perbedaan karakteristik, kedua jenis institusi sama-sama menunjukkan upaya aktif dalam menghubungkan pendidikan tinggi dengan kebutuhan dunia kerja. Secara akademik, penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam pengembangan diskursus teoretis mengenai employability dengan menawarkan kerangka konseptual baru yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai spiritual dengan keterampilan profesional. Kerangka ini mencakup tiga komponen utama: integrasi kurikulum berbasis nilai, kolaborasi strategis dengan dunia industri, dan profil lulusan yang holistik. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan bagi para pembuat kebijakan dan pendidik dalam merancang model pendidikan tinggi yang inklusif dan kontekstual di masyarakat yang pluralistik.

Kata kunci: daya saing lulusan; universitas Islam; universitas Negeri; kesiapan kerja; pendidikan tinggi; kontribusi akademik

Introduction

Graduate employability has become a strategic issue in developing higher education in various countries, including Indonesia.¹ Universities are required not only to produce graduates who excel academically but also to have competencies following the needs of the dynamic and challenging world of work. Amid changes in the labor market that are increasingly digitized and differentiated, the extent to which college graduates are ready to compete in the job market has become very relevant. The mismatch between graduates' competence and the industry's needs has been one of the causes of the increase in the rate of educated unemployment, especially among new graduates.²

This phenomenon becomes more complex when viewed from the diversity of types of higher education institutions in Indonesia³, including public universities (state-based) and Islamic-based universities managed by the government and the private sector.⁴ Islamic universities, for example, have an ideological orientation and curriculum that often integrates religious and general sciences, while public universities are more oriented toward the development of science and technology in a secular manner. This difference in orientation raises profound questions about how each institution prepares its graduates to face the world of work challenges and the extent to which the approach effectively increases graduates' competitiveness.⁵

Several previous studies have addressed the issue of employability in the context of higher education, such as Yorke and Knight (2003), who developed an employability framework based on generic skills and work experience⁶, and Holmes (2013), who criticized the approach by emphasizing the importance of professional identity in the transition process to the world of work.⁷ In Indonesia, a study by Nugroho Wibowo (2016) shows that low industry involvement in the curriculum is the main obstacle to graduate employability.⁸ However, little research still comparatively explores how universities with different values-based and educational approaches design employability improvement strategies, particularly in comparing Islamic universities and public universities.

This gap is an important research gap in this study. Previous studies tend to focus on one type of institution or only highlight technical aspects, such as skills training and internships, without delving deeply into the aspects of values, institutional culture, and educational paradigms that shape employability improvement strategies. In Indonesia's social and ideologically plural context, understanding different approaches to preparing graduates is important as the basis for developing higher education policies that are more contextual and responsive to the needs of society and industry.

The novelty of this research lies in the comparative and multidimensional approach used to understand the strategy to increase employability. This study not only compares Islamic universities and public universities in terms of policies and programs

¹ Hidayanti Balu dkk., "Producing Work Ready Graduates Through Islamic Education Management Strategies," *At-Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial Dan Kebudayaan* 11, no. 2 (30 November 2024): 186–207, doi:10.32505/tarbawi.v11i2.9462.

² Asep Kusmawan dkk., "Advancing Graduate in Private Universities; Developing Graduate Employability for a Challenging Labor," *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (31 Januari 2023): 311–26, doi:10.33650/al-tanzim.v7i1.4213.

³ Seger Handoyo dan Wiwik Sulistiani, "Career adaptability: The influence of readiness and adaptation success in the education context: A literature review" (3rd ASEAN Conference on Psychology, Counselling, and Humanities (ACPCH 2017), 2018), <http://dspace.hangtuah.ac.id:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/dx/904/Wiwikacpch.44.pdf?sequence=1>.

⁴ Seger Handoyo dkk., "The Measurement of Workplace Incivility in Indonesia: Evidence and Construct Validity," *Psychology Research and Behavior Management* Volume 11 (Mei 2018): 217–26, doi:10.2147/PRBM.S163509.

⁵ Apreriri Cahyani, Rugaiyah, dan Neti Karnati, "Employability

of Higher Education Graduates in the Perspective of Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)," *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 15, no. 1 (27 Juni 2024): 57–66, doi:10.21009/jmp.v15i1.50679.

⁶ Peter Knight dan Mantz Yorke, *Learning, Curriculum and Employability in Higher Education* (London: Routledge, 2003), doi:10.4324/9780203465271.

⁷ Leonard Holmes, "Competing perspectives on graduate employability: possession, position or process?," *Studies in Higher Education* 38, no. 4 (1 Mei 2013): 538–54, doi:10.1080/03075079.2011.587140.

⁸ Nugroho Wibowo, "Upaya Memperkecil Kesenjangan Kompetensi Lulusan Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan dengan Tuntutan Dunia Industri," *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi dan Kejuruan* 23, no. 1 (17 Mei 2016): 45–59, doi:10.21831/jptk.v23i1.9354.

but also qualitatively examines how institutional values, educational vision, and daily academic practices affect the formation of graduates' job readiness. This approach provides a more complete and in-depth understanding and opens up space for the emergence of new conceptual frameworks that integrate spiritual values and professionalism in higher education.

Based on the background and research gaps, this study asks the main question: How is the strategy of increasing employability implemented in Islamic-based universities and state universities, and how do the different approaches affect the job readiness of graduates? This question is expanded with related sub-questions: (1) What are the policies and programs designed to improve the competitiveness of graduates? (2) How are the industry, alumni, and the business world involved in the process? (3) To what extent do institutional values shape the work ethic of graduates? This study explores and compares the strategy for increasing employability in Islamic universities and public universities in Indonesia. Specifically, this study aims to (1) identify the programs and policies implemented by both types of institutions, (2) understand the internal and external factors that affect the success of the employability strategy, and (3) formulate policy recommendations based on empirical findings to strengthen the synergy between the world of education and the world of work. Thus, this study is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to developing higher education that is more adaptive, inclusive, and future-oriented.

Method

This study uses a qualitative⁹ approach with a comparative case study design to explore strategies for improving graduate employability in two types of higher education institutions: Islamic-based universities and state universities. This approach was chosen because it helps researchers

understand the complex context, meanings, and social dynamics behind institutional policies and practices in preparing graduates for the workforce.¹⁰ The study focuses on comparing the differences and similarities in each institution's approach, considering their values, organizational culture, and the interaction between education and industry actors. The research sites were selected purposively: one Islamic university and one state university with a strong track record in employability programs. Selection criteria included institutional accreditation, the presence of a career service center, and active involvement in industry partnerships. These two sites were chosen to represent the diversity of approaches based on ideological and institutional backgrounds.

Data collected in this study consist of both primary and secondary sources.¹¹ Primary data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with key informants, including university leaders (such as rectors, deans, and heads of career centers), lecturers, final-year students, and alumni who are already working. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to explore personal experiences and insights relevant to the research topic. Secondary data came from institutional documents such as curricula, strategic plans, tracer study reports, and official university publications related to employability efforts. Participatory observation was also used to complement the interviews, particularly to observe teaching practices, soft skills training, career workshops, and student-industry interactions. These observations helped capture practical aspects of employability strategies that are not always visible in interviews or documents.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis with an inductive approach. The process involved open coding, categorizing, and identifying

⁹ Matthew B Miles dan A. Michael Huberman, *Analisis data kualitatif: buku sumber tentang metode-metode baru* (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 2014).

¹⁰ Hendro Margono, Xun Yi, dan Gitesh K. Raikundalia, "Mining Indonesian cyber bullying patterns in social networks," dalam *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Australasian Computer Science Conference-Volume 147*, 2014, 115–24, <https://scholarhub.undira.ac.id/Mining%20Indonesian%20Cyber%20Bullying%20Patterns%20in%20Social%20Networks.pdf>.

¹¹ Helaluddin dan Hengki Wijaya, *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Sebuah Tinjauan Teori & Praktik* (Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Jaffray, 2019).

key themes that emerged from the data. The analysis was conducted iteratively and continued until thematic saturation was reached. To strengthen the validity of the findings, triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, a member-checking strategy was used, where informants were asked to review the transcripts and interpretations of their interviews to confirm their accuracy. Peer debriefing was also conducted with fellow qualitative researchers to gain critical feedback on the analysis process and conclusions. These steps were taken to minimize researcher bias and ensure that the findings accurately reflect the real experiences and practices studied.

Results and Discussion

Employability Improvement Strategies and Programs

The study results show that both Islamic and public universities have special programs designed to improve the job readiness of graduates. In public universities, employability programs are generally structured and integrated into the academic system, such as through *career development centers*, entrepreneurship courses, and mandatory industrial internship programs. Meanwhile, Islamic universities emphasize an integrative approach that combines Islamic values with professional skills development.¹² In Islamic universities, the employability approach is developed within the framework of *Kamil people*—graduates who are not only academically capable but also spiritually and socially superior. This is reflected in the curriculum that inserts Islamic work ethics courses, *da'wah*-based leadership training, and character development through student organizations based on religious values. Although these programs are not always labeled "employability programs," they aim to form resilient, integrity, and adaptive graduates.¹³

¹² M. Falikul Isbah dkk., "Strategies to Enhance the Employability of Higher Education Graduates in Indonesia: A Way Forward," *Society* 11, no. 2 (31 Desember 2023): 398–414, doi:10.33019/society.v11i2.592.

¹³ M. Iffan Fanani dkk., "Islamic Work Ethics: Urgency and

On the contrary, public universities focus their strategies on fulfilling the work competency standards set by industry and the government.¹⁴ Programs such as soft skills training, CV-making workshops, interview simulations, and business incubators are part of a systematic effort to connect students with the world of work.¹⁵ This model is pragmatic and professional, driven by the need to lower the unemployment rate of graduates.¹⁶ This difference shows that public universities emphasize technical aspects and practical skills more, while Islamic universities emphasize value formation and work ethics. However, both face challenges in terms of program continuity and monitoring of graduate success. In many cases, employability programs do not have clear and sustainable evaluation indicators, making it difficult to measure their long-term effectiveness.

The results of the interviews also indicate that there is a difference in the meaning of "employability" between the two institutions. In Islamic universities, employability is interpreted as part of the educational mandate to produce graduates who are useful to the people. In contrast, in public universities, employability is often positioned as an indicator of the institution's quantitative success, such as through the results of tracer studies.¹⁷ This paradigm difference affects the direction and content of the run programs. Both institutions also showed

Evaluation of Its Curriculum in Indonesian High Schools," *Formosa Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 4, no. 3 (25 Maret 2025): 1293–1312, doi:10.55927/fjmr.v4i3.115.

¹⁴ Sigit Nugroho, Seger Handoyo, dan Wiwin Hendriani, "Psychological Dynamics In The Changing Of Bullying Victims Into Bullies At Student In Islamic Boarding School," *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 7, no. 2 (2021): 151–60.

¹⁵ Aji Ratna Kusuma, Muhammad Ali Adriansyah, dan Netty Dyan Prastika, "Pengaruh daya juang, kecerdasan emosional, dan modal sosial terhadap organizational citizenship behavior dengan persepsi keadilan organisasi sebagai variabel moderasi," *Psikostudia: Jurnal Psikologi* 2, no. 2 (2013): 100–116.

¹⁶ Nhadya Anashthazya Putri Paramitha dan Harmanto Harmanto, "Pengaruh Perencanaan Karir Dan Employability Skills Terhadap Kesiapan Kerja Peserta Didik Kelas XII Jurusan Akuntansi Dan Keuangan Lembaga SMKN Kasiman," *Syntax Literate ; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia* 9, no. 9 (19 September 2024): 4792–4802, doi:10.36418/syntax-literate.v9i9.16332.

¹⁷ "Personal Interview," 2024.

efforts to integrate technology into employability strategies. For example, using online platforms for training, digital certification, and collaboration with recruitment startups is becoming a common practice. However, the digital disparity between universities in big cities and regions is an important issue that needs to be addressed, especially in access to technology-based training.¹⁸

These findings indicate that no single model is effective in improving graduate employability. Instead, the diversity of approaches reflects the need to create a hybrid strategy that blends professionalism, values, and technology.¹⁹ This model can serve as a foundation for higher education policy design that is adaptive to local cultural and economic contexts. Conceptually, this study strengthens the argument that employability is not just a matter of technical skills but the result of the interaction between institutional structures, values, and pedagogical strategies. Thus, employability improvement strategies need to be designed not only to produce a ready-to-use workforce but also for social actors with an ethical orientation and long-term contribution to society.

Industry, Alumni, and Business Involvement

One of the key findings in this study is the importance of the involvement of external actors—especially industry, alumni, and the business world—in supporting the employability of graduates. In public universities, partnerships with industry have become prevalent, especially in internships, applied research, and campus hiring programs. The institution actively collaborates with the business world to expand the network for students and graduates.²⁰

On the other hand, Islamic universities show more selective industrial involvement, often based on ummah networks or community organizations.²¹ Alumni involvement is very strong, especially through alumni forums that actively organize training, seminars, and mentoring. This creates an ecosystem based on values and trust, although in some cases, it is poorly documented administratively. Alumni involvement in Islamic universities also bridges values between the institution and the world of work. Many alumni work in the public or socio-religious sectors, and they return to nurture students to have a work orientation that is not only profit-oriented. This differs from public universities that encourage alumni to contribute institutionally, for example, through donations, industry relations, or participation in career development programs.²²

However, there are still challenges in terms of institutions. Both institutions' industry-linked units (career centers) often lack human resources, budgets, and integration with academic programs.²³ Many collaborative programs run on informal relationships between individuals rather than a solid institutional framework. This limits the sustainability and scalability of the program.²⁴ The business world

"Pengaruh Employability Skills Terhadap Kesiapan Kerja Mahasiswa Pendidikan Masyarakat," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Teknologi Dan Arsitektur* 1, no. 2 (1 November 2023): 301–7, doi:10.57235/motekar.v1i2.1126.

²¹ Arna Asna Annisa dan Rosana Eri Puspita, "Shaping Curriculum in State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) to Match the Job Market," *Muslim Education Review* 1, no. 2 (28 Desember 2022): 178–97, doi:10.56529/mer.v1i2.76.

²² Fauzi Nur Ilahi, Gantina Komalasari, dan Dede Rahmat Hidayat, "Penerapan Program Employability Skills Pada Calon Guru Bimbingan Dan Konseling Di Perguruan Tinggi Se-DKI Jakarta," *Jurnal Mahasiswa BK An-Nur: Berbeda, Bermakna, Mulia* 8, no. 3 (14 November 2022): 49–56, doi:10.31602/jmbkan.v8i3.7614.

²³ Fikha Rizky Aullia, Muladi Muladi, and Syaad Patmanthara, "The Contribution of Self-Concept and Learning Achievement to the Employability Skills of Students of the Informatics Engineering Education Study Program," *Journal of Education: Theory, Research, and Development* 3, no. 12 (December 1, 2018): 1543–49, doi:10.17977/jptpp.v3i12.11790.

²⁴ Anissa Lestari Kadiyono, "Peningkatan Graduate Employability Melalui Career Development Training Pada Mahasiswa," *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 2, no. 12 (4 Desember 2018): 999–1002.

¹⁸ Fauzi Nur Ilahi, Gantina Komalasari, dan Dede Rahmat Hidayat, "Penerapan Program Employability Skills Pada Calon Guru Bimbingan Dan Konseling di Perguruan Tinggi Se-DKI Jakarta," *Jurnal Mahasiswa BK An-Nur: Berbeda, Bermakna, Mulia* 8, no. 3 (14 November 2022): 49–56, doi:10.31602/jmbkan.v8i3.7614.

¹⁹ Devy Sekar Ayu Ningrum and Endah Andriani Pratiwi, "Overview of Employability in Final Year Students of Jenderal Achmad Yani University (Unjani)," *Quanta : Journal of Guidance and Counseling Studies in Education* 5, no. 3 (October 13, 2021): 106–10, doi:10.22460/q.v5i3p106-110.2816.

²⁰ Silvia Yolanda, Daeng Ayub, dan Dafetta Fitrilinda,

acknowledges the differences in the character of graduates from the two institutions.²⁵ Graduates of Islamic universities are considered more honest and resistant to pressure, although they sometimes lack initiative in the context of market competition. In contrast, public university graduates are more adaptive to technology and have good presentation skills but often face problems in work ethics and time management. This difference is an important input in designing the curriculum and employability training.²⁶

These findings show that business involvement cannot be standardized. Institutions need to build a system of engagement that is flexible and adaptive to the characteristics of their respective local and institutional cultures. A long-term strategic partnership-based approach is key to the success of a sustainable employability program.²⁷ One of the important recommendations of the study's results is the need to establish a multi-stakeholder forum between universities, industry, and the alumni community. This forum is a vehicle for exchanging information, job opportunities, and a social laboratory to design a real-world-based collaborative learning model. In this way, employability becomes a collective process, not just the responsibility of educational institutions.²⁸

Theoretically, this external involvement reinforces the stakeholder-based employability

approach, emphasizing the importance of inter-stakeholder relationships in shaping job readiness. This approach complements the dominant individualistic framework and provides a new perspective on employability as a multi-layered product of social interaction.

The Role of Institutional Values in the Formation of Work Ethics

Institutional values shape graduates' work attitudes, professional ethics, and social orientation. In Islamic universities, religious values such as honesty, trust, and *fastabiqul khairat* are the foundation for shaping students' work ethic. These values are taught formally in the classroom and internalized through habituation in student organization activities, spiritual development, and campus culture.²⁹ In public universities, institutional values are more nationalistic and professional. Work ethic is built through a spirit of competition, academic achievement, and integrity as part of individual achievement. This can be seen from the high culture of meritocracy, a clear reward and punishment system, and an orientation to measurable career achievements. This kind of culture is considered to be able to foster work motivation, although, on the other hand, it can give rise to high competitive pressure.³⁰

The influence of institutional values on employability can be seen in the work behavior of alumni. Graduates of Islamic universities tend to have a high social orientation and loyalty to their home institution but sometimes face difficulties in adapting to a highly competitive work environment. In contrast, public university graduates quickly adapt to work pressures but lack strong ethical roots

²⁵ Angela Elvanni Bemil and William Gunawan, "Testing the Effectiveness of 3E (Employability and Entrepreneurship Enhancement) Intervention Programs in UKRIDA Psychology Students," *As-Syar'i: Journal of Family Guidance & Counseling* 6, no. 1 (10 January 2024): 1035–50, doi:10.47467/as.v6i1.6128.

²⁶ Kardina Engelina Siregar dan Ali Musri Semjan Putra, "The Efficiency of Islamic Higher Education Curriculum in Indonesia: A Literature Review on Improving Intellectual Competence and Work Readiness Through Islamic Religious Education," *International Journal of Studies in International Education* 1, no. 4 (15 November 2024): 44–59, doi:10.62951/ijisie.v1i4.111.

²⁷ Suranto Suranto dkk., "The Contribution of Kampus Mengajar Program to the Students' Personal Development and Employability," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 15, no. 3 (6 September 2023): 2922–34, doi:10.35445/alishlah.v15i3.3468.

²⁸ Bintang Eka Putri dan Dimas Aryo Wicaksono, "Perbedaan Employability Mahasiswa Magang Merdeka dengan Program Magang Lainnya," *Buletin Riset Psikologi dan Kesehatan Mental (BRPKM)* 2, no. 1 (26 Juli 2022), doi:10.20473/brpkm.v2i1.36764.

²⁹ Endang Tyasmaning, "Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Melalui Integrasi Nilai Spiritual Dalam Kinerja Akademik Mahasiswa Di Institut Agama Islam Sunan Kalijogo Malang," *Akademika: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (6 Desember 2024): 266–79, doi:10.51339/akademika.v6i2.3146.

³⁰ Altamahira Amara Zahra Indrawan dan Megawati Batubara, "Peran Employability Development Opportunities terhadap Employability Mahasiswa Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Padjadjaran," *Journal of Psychological Science and Profession* 8, no. 1 (30 April 2024): 41–51, doi:10.24198/jpsp.v8i1.47353.

to guide decision-making.³¹ Combining grades and technical competencies is the main challenge in forming job-ready graduates. Unfortunately, the integration between the two has not been optimal in both types of universities. Islamic universities are still constrained in transforming values into skill-based outcomes, while public universities often override the ethical dimension in pursuing professionalism targets.³² From interviews with alumni and graduate users, there is hope for the presence of graduates who are not only technically employable but also have a *moral compass* in work. This need has become particularly relevant amid various integrity crises in the world of work, including corrupt practices, data manipulation, and low work ethics.

Therefore, forming a work ethic cannot rely solely on technical training. Institutions must develop a learning ecosystem that encourages early reflection on values, ethical dialogue, and forming a professional identity. This can be done through collaboration between lecturers, academic supervisors, and alumni in character education based on real practice.³³ Thus, institutional value is a symbol and a strategic instrument in forming employability. This study confirms that values and ethics are integral to job readiness, not something separate from technical competence. The integration of values in higher education is an urgent need in producing graduates who are able to work and humanize work.

Conclusion

This study finds that Islamic-based universities and public universities in Indonesia adopt different yet complementary strategies to enhance graduate

employability. Public universities generally prioritize professionalism and labor market demands by offering structured internship programs, technical skills training, and formal partnerships with industry. In contrast, Islamic universities focus on value-based strategies, integrating spiritual development, work ethics, and character education into their academic and extracurricular activities. Both approaches help prepare graduates to be skilled and socially responsible. Industry, alumni, and businesses also play a key role. Public universities work formally with the private sector, while Islamic universities rely on community and alumni networks. Despite different approaches, both institutions show that external collaboration is key to sustainable employability. However, a main challenge is the lack of structured systems, as many programs still depend on informal networks and personal efforts. Institutional values influence graduate ethics and behavior. Islamic universities produce socially driven graduates with strong integrity but may lack competitiveness under pressure, while public university graduates are more competitive yet may face ethical challenges. This study concludes that employability is not solely determined by technical training but is the outcome of a complex interplay between institutional strategies, stakeholder engagement, and value formation. Therefore, an integrative approach that combines professional skills, moral grounding, and social connectivity is essential to produce well-rounded, employable graduates.

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³¹ Bemil dan Gunawan, "Uji Efektivitas Program Intervensi 3E (Employability Dan Entrepreneurship Enhancement) Pada Mahasiswa Psikologi UKRIDA."

³² Ulfyani Mungasiroh and Moh Roqib, "The Integration of Islam, Science, and Culture of the Archipelago in Private Islamic Universities and Relevance at UII Yogyakarta" 6, no. 2 (18 January 2024): 12765–73, doi:10.31004/joe.v6i2.4904.

³³ Sri Haryanto dkk., "Peran Integrasi Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Untuk Membentuk Etika Professional Mahasiswa," *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 6, no. 4 (29 November 2023): 2638–42, doi:10.31004/jrpp.v6i4.22091.

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