

VOLUME 2


Issue 1, Mei 2025

CAREER PATHS AND EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: A TRACER STUDY OF INDONESIAN LITERATURE ALUMNI AT UNIVERSITAS ALKHAIRAAT PALU

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Article || Published: 30/5/2025

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How to cite || Putra, R.A., et al. (2025). Career Paths and Educational Effectiveness: A Tracer Study Of Indonesian Literature Alumni At Universitas Alkhairaat. *Applied Linguistics: Innovative Approaches and Emerging Trends*. 2(1), 1–21.

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Abstract || This study examines the alignment between the employment of alumni from the Indonesian Literature Study Program at Universitas Alkhairaat and the field of knowledge they pursued. To achieve these goals, the researcher conducted a qualitative descriptive analysis of alumni who graduated in the past two years, using an online tracer study questionnaire. The results were presented in chart to facilitate the understanding of quantitative data. The findings revealed that most alumni from the program have entered the workforce. 78% of participants stated that the courses offered in the program were relevant to their current jobs, while 22% found no relevance. The researcher concluded that this mismatch could be attributed to the competitive job market and workforce saturation, leading employers to seek graduates with specialized skills and unique value.

Keywords || Alumni, Career, Education, Indonesian Literature, Tracer Study.

Abstrak || Penelitian ini mengkaji kesesuaian antara pekerjaan alumni Program Studi Sastra Indonesia di Universitas Alkhairaat dengan bidang ilmu yang mereka tekuni. Untuk mencapai tujuan ini, peneliti melakukan analisis deskriptif kualitatif terhadap alumni yang lulus dalam dua tahun terakhir, menggunakan kuesioner tracer study secara daring. Hasilnya disajikan dalam bentuk grafik untuk memudahkan pemahaman data kuantitatif. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar alumni dari program ini telah memasuki dunia kerja. Sebanyak 78% partisipan menyatakan bahwa mata kuliah yang ditawarkan dalam program studi relevan dengan pekerjaan yang mereka jalani, sementara 22% lainnya merasa tidak ada relevansi sama sekali. Peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa ketidaksesuaian ini disebabkan oleh pasar kerja yang sangat kompetitif dan saturasi di dunia kerja, yang menyebabkan para pemberi kerja mencari lulusan dengan keterampilan khusus dan nilai unik.

Katakunci || Alumin, Karir, Pendidikan, Sastra Indonesia, Tracer Study.

Introduction

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in enhancing the intelligence of the nation. As providers of higher education, universities are expected to produce graduates who not only possess high competencies but also have the ability to create job opportunities in society and are ready to face the challenges of the workforce. Through tracer studies, universities can assess the extent to which their graduates contribute to development and how relevant the education they received is to the needs of the labor market. The tracer study aims to collect data on alumni who are employed or unemployed and to evaluate the knowledge and skills gained during their education, as applied in industry and business. With this study, universities can evaluate and improve the quality of their services and educational programs based on feedback from alumni, which in turn allows for improvements in the management and delivery of education (Sadikin et al., 2023, p. 91).

The implementation of a tracer study, which is also an essential part of the accreditation process for study programs, reflects the seriousness of a program in carrying out the learning process (Khohar et al., 2023). Moreover, it demonstrates the program's commitment to being accountable to society for the trust placed in them by students who choose to study in that particular program. By conducting tracer studies, a study program focuses not only on evaluating the quality of education provided but also on the long-term impact experienced by alumni in their professional lives. Tracer studies offer valuable insights for improving curricula and teaching methods to better align with labor market needs. This also shows that the program is striving to continually improve the quality of education and provides concrete evidence that they have successfully produced competent graduates who are ready to contribute to society. As a form of accountability, the implementation of tracer studies also demonstrates transparency in the educational process and shows a commitment to meeting the expectations and needs of stakeholders, such as students, alumni, and the community.

Alumni & Tracer Study as Self-Evaluation

The alumni aspect is one of the key elements in the self-evaluation process of higher education institutions. One of the requirements set by BAN-PT is the implementation of an alumni tracer study, which

serves as a tool for conducting self-evaluation for higher education institutions. Through tracer study activities, universities are expected to obtain in-depth information and useful feedback regarding the quality of education that has been provided. This feedback is highly valuable for evaluating how relevant the education provided is to the needs of the labor market and the development of industries. Additionally, the results of the tracer study can serve as a basis for universities to plan improvements and developments in the curriculum, teaching methods, as well as services for students and alumni. Thus, the tracer study functions not only as a current self-evaluation tool but also as a consideration for improving the quality of education in the future, to ensure that graduates possess competencies that align with labor market demands and contribute positively to society.

A tracer study is research aimed at collecting data or conducting surveys on graduates from higher education institutions, also known as alumni. The information obtained through this research can be used to evaluate the processes and outcomes of higher education, which will, in turn, assist in efforts to improve the quality of the institution (Salindo and Salindo, 2023). Tracer studies are also conducted to meet standard 3 in the accreditation of study programs, which requires each program to conduct tracer studies related to alumni. However, the implementation of tracer studies is not only carried out due to accreditation requirements but also as a routine activity carried out by study programs to gather feedback on the learning process and build cooperation with alumni employers. The existence of tracer studies plays an important role not only for accreditation purposes but also for the development of the study program itself.

The government, through the Directorate of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemdikbudristek), encourages universities to report the results of alumni tracer studies, which will be used as a basis for university ranking. To obtain data and information about alumni, universities can take advantage of the development of information technology, which allows the alumni tracing process to be carried out more effectively and efficiently. This research also utilizes the ever-developing information technology to collect alumni-related data.

The objectives of the tracer study are as follows:

- 1) To identify the current positions and locations of alumni and ensure continuous, up-to-date communication with them.
- 2) To assess the skills and competencies acquired by alumni following the completion of their education.

- 3) To evaluate the extent to which the curriculum offered in higher education aligns with the skills required by alumni in the workforce.
- 4) To fulfill the requirements stipulated by accreditation or certification processes for academic programs.
- 5) To evaluate the effectiveness of communication networks between alumni and relevant stakeholders, with the aim of strengthening relationships and fostering collaboration.
- 6) To assess the extent of alumni absorption into the workforce.
- 7) To examine the alignment between alumni competencies and the positions or roles they occupy within the industry.
- 8) To evaluate the proportion of alumni engaged in entrepreneurship or establishing their own businesses.

Through the implementation of the tracer study, higher education institutions can identify key areas for curriculum enhancement, improve the overall quality of education, and build stronger relationships with industry stakeholders. Furthermore, the findings from the tracer study provide valuable insights into the contributions of graduates to economic and social development.

Profile of the Indonesian Literature Study Program, Alkhairaat University

The Indonesian Literature Study Program at Alkhairaat University is one of the oldest programs within the Faculty of Literature, established on December 16, 1989, through the decree of the Minister of Education and Culture, alongside the launch of the Arabic Literature Study Program. Over time, the curriculum of this program has undergone continuous adjustments and updates. According to Presidential Regulation No. 8 of 2012 regarding the National Qualification Framework (KKNI), qualifications refer to learning outcomes that demonstrate the level of knowledge and skills acquired by an individual. This also includes the measurement of competencies through diplomas and public recognition that is transparent and accountable. Curriculum evaluations are conducted to assess the strengths and weaknesses, such as the number of courses, their naming, distribution, and equivalence. Significant updates were made in 2009, 2014, 2019, and 2022 through curriculum workshops, resulting in a new curriculum comprising 147 credit hours and 58 courses.

The curriculum evaluation of the Indonesian Literature Study Program yielded several key considerations. First, it examined the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, including the number of courses, naming conventions, course codes, and the distribution of courses per semester. The curriculum also accounts for the equivalence for students from previous cohorts who have not completed certain courses. Some of the strengths include placing micro-linguistics courses in the early semesters (2–6) to facilitate language research, and the redistribution of macro-linguistics courses in semester 7, which provides students with fundamental knowledge before engaging in broader studies. However, there are some weaknesses that need improvement, such as the course naming conventions still being tied to faculty expertise, the lack of uniformity in course codes, and an underdeveloped curriculum structure.

The vision of the study program is to develop the study of Indonesian Literature, Language, and Culture in a creative, innovative, and communicative manner, based on strong moral ethics and Islamic insight by 2035. The objectives of the program include producing graduates with high academic capabilities, entrepreneurial spirit, professionalism, and a strong appreciation for local cultural values and current technology. Additionally, the program aims to enhance research achievements in literature, language, and culture that are internationally recognized, and to build partnerships with various stakeholders to support education and research.

The strategic short-term and long-term goals of the program include the integration of technology into learning, the development of a curriculum responsive to the evolving field of Indonesian literature and culture, and the strengthening of students' academic and entrepreneurial skills. The program also aims to improve the efficiency of study program management and implement periodic evaluations to continuously enhance the quality of education.

Graduate Profile

Graduates of the Indonesian Literature Study Program are prepared to become scholars and professionals who are proficient in various fields of literature, language, and culture, with deep analytical abilities and practical skills. The following are some of the career paths that graduates may pursue:

- 1) Academics: Graduates are capable of studying and critically analyzing issues related to literature, language, and culture, as well

- as utilizing technology for research in Indonesian literature and teaching Indonesian as a foreign language.
- 2) Literature Researcher: Graduates can design and apply literary theories in research and adapt to technological advancements in the research process.
 - 3) Literary Practitioner: Graduates are capable of creating creative literary works (poetry, prose, drama) and distributing these works through information technology media.
 - 4) Writer: Graduates are able to write both scholarly and popular books in the fields of language, literature, and culture, and collaborate with publishing institutions.
 - 5) Editor: Graduates can edit both academic and popular writing and establish partnerships with publishers and media organizations.
 - 6) Journalist: Graduates can perform journalistic duties with professionalism, adhere to journalistic ethics, and collaborate with journalistic institutions.

The Indonesian Literature Study Program is committed to producing competent, high-quality graduates who make significant contributions to education, research, and the development of Indonesian culture.

The curriculum in the Indonesian Literature Study Program at Alkhairaat University is continuously updated to address future challenges and meet the demands of the professional world. In recent workshops, several courses were adjusted to include the latest academic issues, such as Critical Discourse Studies and Literary Anthropology. These updates are influenced by the numerous research projects conducted by alumni focused on literature and cultural studies.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher aims to analyze the extent to which the courses taught and the areas of study align with the careers pursued by alumni of the Indonesian Literature Study Program at Alkhairaat University. This research also aims to identify the sectors where alumni from the program are employed and evaluate the time it takes for alumni to secure employment after graduation. Additionally, the study will explore the level of satisfaction among employers regarding the competencies and work quality of alumni. Therefore, this research not only focuses on the alignment between education and the workforce but also evaluates the effectiveness of the study program in preparing graduates who are ready to compete in various sectors, as well as how alumni work experiences are perceived by society and the industry.

Methodology

This study is descriptive qualitative research with a quantitative approach. Qualitative research is used to map and explain the issues or situations experienced by the alumni (Andari et al., 2021). These situations are then interpreted thematically. The results of the observations will be presented quantitatively to depict the data thematically, making it easier to understand. The data required for this study include information from alumni regarding their employment, income, competencies, and the alignment of their field of study with their jobs.

Participants

The population in this study consists of alumni from the Indonesian Literature Study Program who graduated in the past two years, specifically from 2021 to 2023. From this population, 58 individuals were selected as participants in this study. The selection of the number of participants was made based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives. The participants involved in this study were selected using purposive sampling, which is a sampling method that targets individuals based on specific characteristics. Purposive sampling, also known as judgment sampling, involves intentionally selecting participants based on specific qualities or characteristics they possess (Etikan et. al., 2016). In this case, purposive sampling was chosen because the researcher wanted to focus on alumni who had recently graduated, specifically within the 2021 to 2023 period, to obtain more relevant information regarding their experiences after graduation in a relatively short period. The primary reason for selecting purposive sampling is to obtain participants who have concentrated knowledge, experience, and perspectives that align with the research objectives. Since only alumni who meet the graduation criteria within the last two years are relevant to the research topic, this method ensures that all selected participants can provide the necessary information for this study.

Using purposive sampling also allows the researcher to gain deeper insights into the specific experiences of alumni during their transition after graduation. This approach is expected to provide more valid and informative results related to the research topic, such as the alumni's preparedness for entering the workforce, the influence of the education they received, or the challenges they faced after graduation.

Therefore, this sampling method ensures that the collected data is more targeted and relevant to the research objectives.

Instrument and Procedures

Data collection for this study was conducted using an online tracer study questionnaire distributed to alumni of the Indonesian Literature Study Program at Universitas Alkhairaat. The questionnaire was shared through alumni groups and also directly to the alumni. The design of this questionnaire aims to identify various important aspects, including experiences during their studies, the jobs they hold, their income, and the extent to which their field of study aligns with the type of work they are doing. After the data is collected through the questionnaire, the results will be presented in the form of data visualizations, such as diagrams and tables, to facilitate understanding and analysis.

Data Analysis

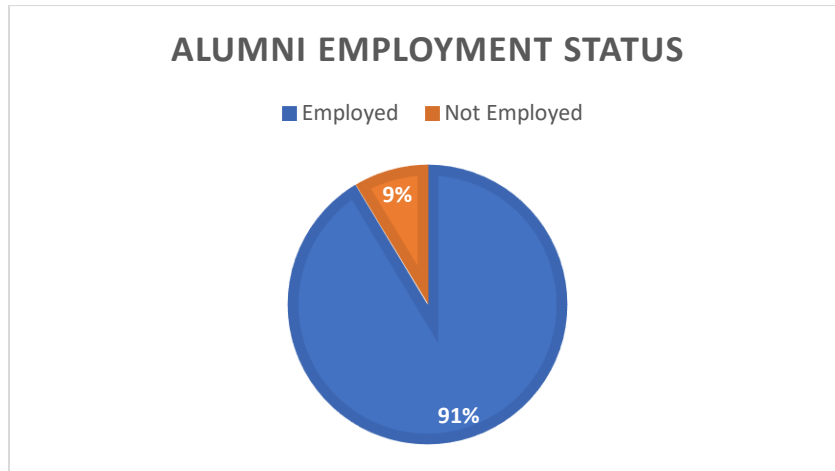
The data obtained from the questionnaires will be analyzed using a descriptive approach, which aims to provide an overview of the variables being studied, such as employment, income, and the alignment between the field of study and the jobs held by the alumni. Additionally, the analysis will also be conducted narratively, based on available annual tracer study reports, to provide a deeper context regarding the findings. The results of this analysis will be presented thematically, with the goal of exploring and understanding further the relationship between alumni of the Indonesian Literature Study Program at Universitas Alkhairaat and the work they are doing after graduation. This will provide clearer insights into the degree of alignment between the education they received and the workforce, as well as other factors affecting their income and career development.

Results

The results of this study were obtained from a questionnaire completed by 58 alumni, who participated as respondents. The questionnaire was distributed digitally through Google Form, allowing for efficient data collection. This method was chosen to reach a broad audience of alumni, as it provided a convenient and accessible platform for them to share their responses. By utilizing a digital format, we were able to gather responses from alumni located in various regions, overcoming geographical barriers that might have otherwise limited participation. The use of Google Form also facilitated the organization and analysis

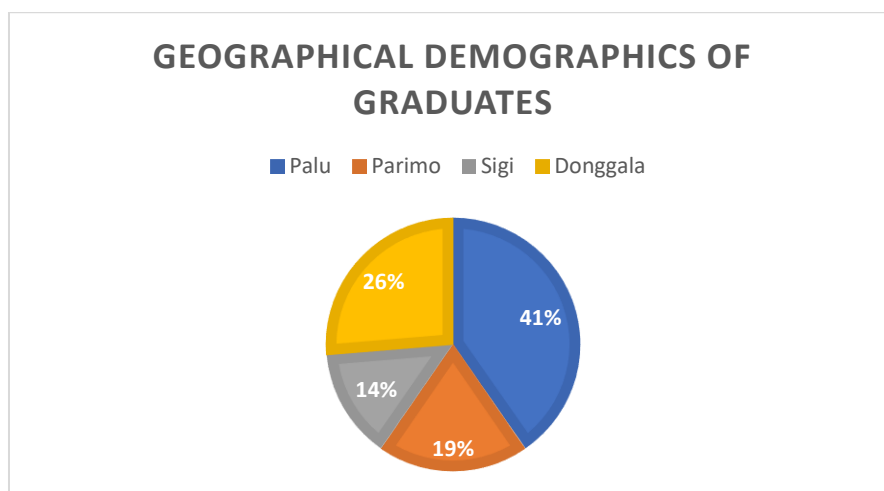
of the data, ensuring a streamlined process for compiling and interpreting the results.

Figure 1. Alumni Status of Indonesian Literature Study Program



Out of the total 58 alumni surveyed, about 91% are employed, while the remaining 9% are not. The employed alumni are spread across various sectors, such as education, broadcasting, and private companies. These sectors reflect the diversity of career paths taken by graduates of the Indonesian Literature Study Program. Meanwhile, for the alumni who are not employed, most of them are still in the process of job hunting. Some may be in an intensive search phase, while others might face challenges in finding a job that matches their skills or preferences. Factors like job market competition or the need to adapt to available opportunities may also affect their situation.

Figure 2. Geographical Demographics of Graduates



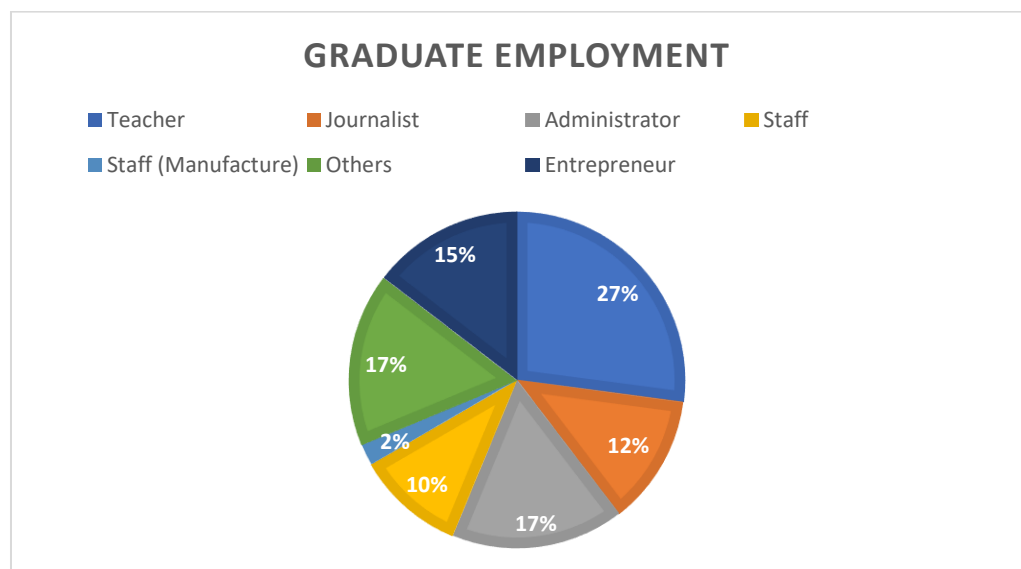
The alumni of the Indonesian Literature Study Program, Faculty of Arts, Universitas Alkhairaat, come from various regions scattered across Central Sulawesi. The majority of the alumni are from Palu, the

provincial capital, which naturally has greater access to higher education and various opportunities. However, in addition to Palu, alumni also come from other areas such as Donggala, Parigi Moutong, and Sigi.

Interestingly, the majority of the alumni are from Donggala Regency, with a significant number of students coming from the Watatu area. This region has become a major contributor to the alumni numbers, reflecting that many locals choose to continue their education at Universitas Alkhairaat, particularly in the Indonesian Literature Study Program.

Furthermore, Sigi and Parigi Moutong Regencies also contribute a significant number of alumni. This is closely linked to the role of the Alkhairaat Foundation as a center for educational development in these areas. The presence of many madrasahs in these regions has led the local community to have greater trust in sending their children to Universitas Alkhairaat. This factor is further supported by the positive reputation of Universitas Alkhairaat in providing quality education, which has led many parents from Sigi, Parigi Moutong, and other areas to choose to send their children there, particularly to study Indonesian Literature at the higher education level. The community's trust in the foundation has created a strong connection between local education and Universitas Alkhairaat, which has become the top choice for many students in the region.

Figure 3. Graduate Employment



Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that the majority of graduates from the Indonesian Literature Study Program at Universitas Alkhairaat choose to work in the education field, particularly as

Indonesian language teachers. This career choice aligns with the vision and objectives of the Faculty of Arts curriculum, which not only prepares graduates to become researchers in literature but also as academics who contribute to the development of the fields of literature, language, and culture. This indicates that the program has successfully prepared its graduates to play an active role in the education and cultural sectors.

In addition, the chart shows that some alumni work as administrators in government agencies, such as the Education and Culture Department of Central Sulawesi Province. This role reflects the contribution of alumni in the public sector, particularly in managing and developing policies in the fields of education and culture.

Not only in the public sector, but there are also alumni who work in the media industry as journalists in local and national media outlets. This job demonstrates that graduates of the Indonesian Literature Study Program are capable of adapting to the needs of the media industry, both in producing quality journalistic work and in managing information across various platforms.

However, some of the jobs they have chosen are not entirely aligned with the graduate profile, such as those who have decided to enter the manufacturing sector. This choice does not align with the academic vision and graduate profile outlined in the curriculum of the Indonesian Literature Study Program. The Indonesian Literature Study Program is designed to prepare graduates for careers in fields closely related to language, literature, culture, and education. The curriculum aims to produce graduates who are equipped to become researchers, educators, writers, or cultural experts, contributing to the development of literature, language, and cultural studies. Therefore, entering a sector like manufacturing, which is typically more focused on production and industry, seems to diverge from the intended career trajectory set by the program.

However, this shift into fields like manufacturing might be influenced by various external factors, such as job market conditions, regional economic opportunities, or personal preferences. In some cases, graduates may find opportunities in industries outside their field of study that offer better financial stability or career growth.

The findings reveal an interesting discrepancy between the graduate profile envisioned by the curriculum and the actual

occupations pursued by alumni. While the Indonesian Literature Study Program prepares graduates for careers as academics, researchers, writers, editors, and journalists, the employment distribution indicates that most graduates are concentrated in teaching and administrative positions. This pattern suggests that labor market opportunities may exert a stronger influence on career choices than the occupational pathways envisioned by the curriculum. The finding also reflects the broader reality faced by humanities graduates, who often need to adapt their competencies to a wider range of employment sectors beyond those explicitly targeted by the study program.

Figure 4. Time Taken to Secure Employment

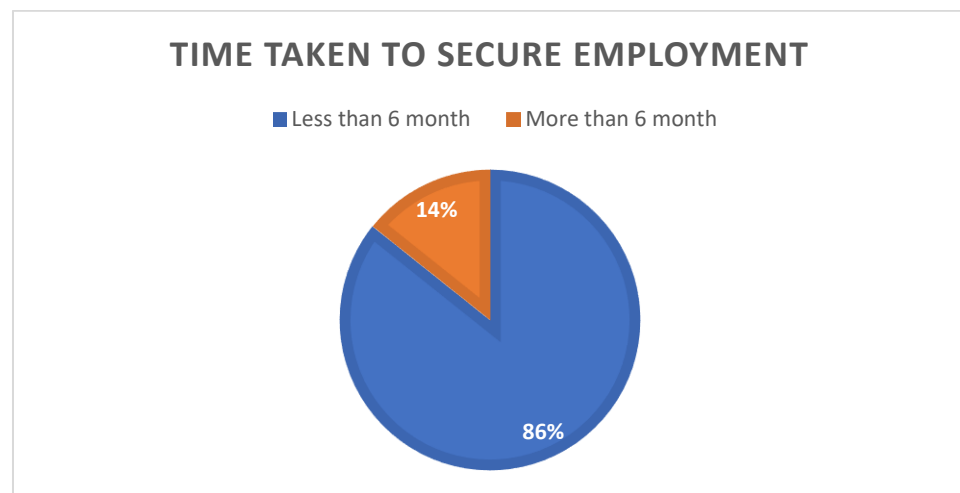
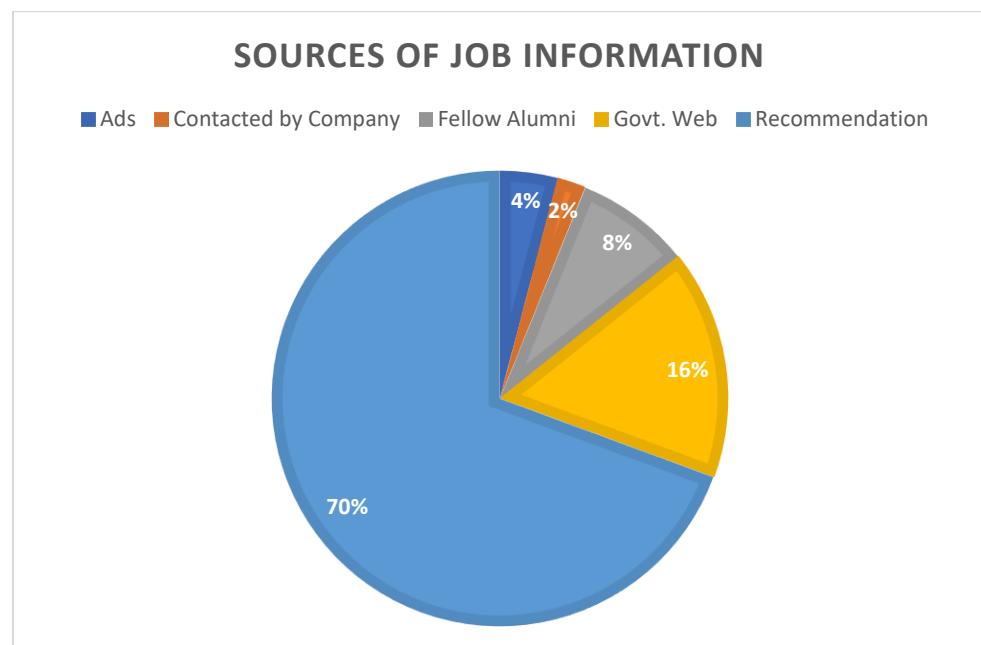


Figure 5. Sources of Job Information



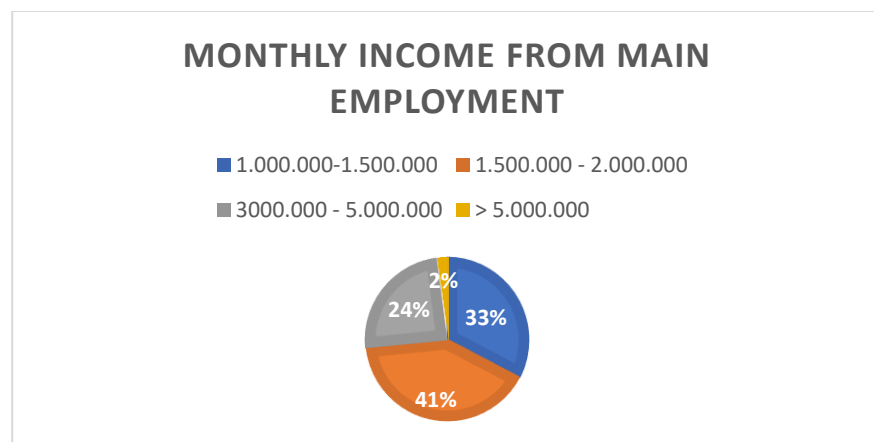
The majority of alumni from the Indonesian Literature Study Program successfully secured employment within six months after

graduation. Most of the job opportunities were found through recommendations from colleagues, friends, or professors they had known during their university years. These personal networks have played a significant role in connecting graduates with potential employers. In addition, some alumni found jobs through governmental placement programs offered. These placement programs serve as an important avenue for graduates, especially those aiming for a career in the public sector.

Furthermore, a number of alumni obtained their jobs through job advertisements or were directly contacted by companies interested in hiring them. This demonstrates that alumni are also leveraging traditional methods, such as job postings, as well as responding to the increasing demand for skilled professionals in various sectors. The diverse ways in which alumni find employment highlight not only the importance of personal connections but also the role of formal placement programs and active job searching in securing professional opportunities.

The relationship between employment acquisition and sources of job information highlights the important role of social capital in graduates' transition to the workforce. The dominance of personal networks, including lecturers, colleagues, and friends, suggests that employability is influenced not only by academic qualifications but also by access to professional connections. This finding indicates that universities should strengthen alumni networks and career support services, as these mechanisms may facilitate a smoother transition from higher education to employment.

Figure 6. Monthly Income from Main Employment



Based on chart no. 6, it can be seen that the income of the alumni from their main employment is mostly in the range of 1.5 million to 2

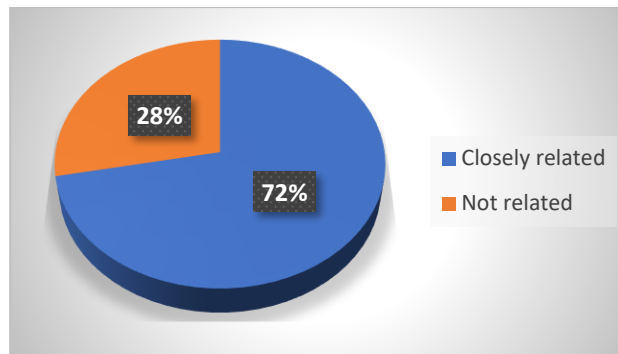
million Rupiah per month. Meanwhile, 33% of the alumni earn between 1 million and 1.5 million Rupiah. This indicates a noticeable gap between the salaries received by the alumni and the minimum wage in Central Sulawesi, which is 2.9 million Rupiah. On the other hand, 24% of the alumni work as civil servants, with salaries ranging from 3 million to 5 million Rupiah per month.

This data reveals an income disparity among the alumni, particularly when compared to the regional minimum wage. The majority of alumni earn below or just at the threshold of the minimum wage, reflecting the challenges faced by graduates in securing higher-paying jobs. The gap between alumni earnings and the minimum wage can be attributed to various factors, including the types of industries they work in and the availability of job opportunities in their respective fields.

However, the 24% of alumni employed as civil servants earn salaries that surpass the regional minimum wage, which indicates that certain sectors, particularly government positions, offer more competitive pay. This discrepancy also suggests that the alumni working in the private sector or other fields may face more financial challenges, which highlights the importance of improving job quality, increasing wages, and ensuring that graduates have access to better-paying employment opportunities. As the job market evolves, addressing these disparities may be crucial for the long-term career prospects of alumni in the region.

The finding that a substantial proportion of graduates earn below the provincial minimum wage raises concerns regarding the quality of employment obtained by alumni. While employment absorption is relatively high, employment quality appears to remain a challenge. This suggests that graduate success should not be evaluated solely based on employment status but also on income level, career progression, and job security. Similar concerns have been identified in graduate employability studies, which emphasize the distinction between employment quantity and employment quality.

Figure 7. Graduates' Views on the Connection Between Their Job and Study Program



Based on the data we collected, the majority of alumni have different perspectives regarding the connection between their current jobs and the knowledge they gained in the Indonesian Literature Study Program. The finding that 78% of alumni perceive a strong relationship between their current occupations and their academic background suggests that the curriculum has generally succeeded in preparing graduates for relevant employment sectors. This result is consistent with the graduate profile of the program, which emphasizes careers in education, writing, journalism, and cultural studies. Similar findings were reported by Andari et al. (2021), who found that curriculum relevance contributes positively to graduate employability. The relatively high level of alignment may indicate that the competencies developed during undergraduate study remain applicable in the local labor market.

Although the majority of graduates reported a strong alignment between education and employment, 22% indicated that their current occupations are unrelated to their academic background. This finding may reflect the growing phenomenon of job mismatch among university graduates. In developing labor markets, graduates often prioritize employment opportunities over occupational relevance due to limited job availability. As argued by Tomlinson (2008), employability is increasingly influenced not only by academic specialization but also by adaptability and transferable skills. Therefore, the presence of job mismatch should not necessarily be interpreted as program failure but may instead reflect broader labor market dynamics.

Continuing Education

Out of the 58 alumni we invited to participate in the tracer study, only one has recently completed their master's program. For this alumni, continuing education to the master's level is not only aimed at deepening knowledge in their field of study but also as an effort to actualize themselves. They feel that by completing a master's degree,

they can maximize their personal potential, allowing them to make a greater contribution to society.

This alumnus believes that a master's degree opens opportunities to acquire broader skills and insights, which in turn will enable them to be more effective in helping others, both in professional and social contexts. Furthermore, for them, continuing education to the master's level is a form of personal investment that not only enriches themselves but also provides broader benefits, such as playing a role in community development or creating positive change in their surroundings.

Suggestions from Alumni of the Indonesian Literature Study Program for the Advancement of Education Quality

In this tracer study, we also provided a section for suggestions from alumni, which could be considered for the development of the curriculum and academic vision of the study program in the future. Each response provided by alumni is marked with the symbol "R" to distinguish it as their feedback.

"Improvement of facilities and infrastructure should be prioritized." – R3

Certainly, facilities and infrastructure are key aspects that significantly impact the quality of education and the success of the student learning process. Adequate facilities, such as comfortable classrooms, access to libraries with comprehensive book collections, and laboratories equipped with modern tools, can enhance the effectiveness of learning. Additionally, the presence of other supporting facilities, such as fast internet access, discussion rooms, and areas for practical work or personal development, is crucial in supporting a more interactive and productive learning process.

Good facilities not only help students understand the course material but also provide them with opportunities to develop practical skills needed in the workforce. For example, classrooms equipped with advanced audiovisual technology can help students understand the material more clearly and engagingly. Meanwhile, sports facilities and recreation rooms also play an important role in supporting the balance between academic and non-academic activities, which greatly impacts students' mental and physical well-being.

Furthermore, accessibility to these facilities is also a key factor, because without adequate facilities and infrastructure, students may face

barriers in optimizing their learning process. Therefore, suggestions regarding the development and maintenance of high-quality, evolving facilities in line with the needs of the times are essential in creating a conducive educational environment that supports students' success.

"It is recommended to align the courses offered with current conditions and those relevant to the job market." – R4

" I did not receive information related to a job that matches my field of study." – R7

The suggestions provided by respondents in this tracer study are very important as they reflect the direct needs and expectations of alumni who have experienced the educational process in the study program. These suggestions offer valuable insights for the development of the study program, particularly in ensuring that the curriculum implemented is truly relevant and equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the workforce.

For example, alumni who have entered the professional world often have a clearer perspective on practical skills that were underemphasized during their studies but are crucial in the field. These may include technical skills, communication abilities, problem-solving, or even soft skills such as leadership and teamwork. Therefore, feedback from alumni becomes vital in designing a more comprehensive and balanced curriculum that not only focuses on theory but also takes into account practical skills that can be directly applied in the workforce.

In addition, suggestions from alumni can provide insights into changes in trends and industry needs that may not yet be reflected in the existing curriculum. By responding to this input, the study program can make adjustments so that graduates are more prepared to face the ever-evolving professional demands. This will enhance the competitiveness of graduates in the job market, while also ensuring that the education provided by the study program is not only relevant but also adds real value for students after graduation.

Overall, alumni feedback is extremely valuable for the study program, as they are the ones who have directly experienced the benefits and challenges of the education they received. By listening to and acting on these suggestions, the study program can continue to evolve and make a greater contribution in preparing students for their careers and active roles in society.

Mismatch Between Alumni's Jobs and Their Field of Study

According to the results of the tracer study, most graduates have found jobs related to their field of study; however, some also feel that the knowledge they gained from their study program is completely unrelated to their current job. This is due to the increasingly competitive recruitment process and job market. The job market in Indonesia is unable to absorb the growing workforce, with 7.6 million people entering the workforce in 2023 (Kementerian Ketenagakerjaan Republik Indonesia). As a result, job seekers often have no choice but to accept jobs that may not align with their field of study. Tomlinson (2008) shares a similar view, stating that nowadays, the field of study of graduates no longer has a significant impact on their job outcomes. Job seekers need additional qualities to be absorbed by the job market, meaning they cannot be expected to specialize in only one area of knowledge. Instead, they must be willing to learn and be versatile in other fields in order to survive in a highly competitive environment.

Job mismatches experienced by individuals can have significant negative impacts, both on individual performance and the overall performance of the organization or institution they work for. When a person works outside their area of expertise or education, they may feel demotivated, dissatisfied, or even stressed. This can lead to a decline in work quality, an increase in mistakes, and an overall reduction in productivity.

Manullang and Wardini (2021) suggest that such job mismatches not only affect the mental well-being of employees but can also have consequences for organizational performance. Employees who feel disconnected from their roles are likely to have lower engagement levels, which in turn can affect their ability to work effectively within teams and meet organizational objectives. This mismatch may also increase employee turnover, as those who are dissatisfied with their roles are more likely to seek opportunities elsewhere (Dilly & Papuling, 2021).

From the organizational perspective, job mismatches can negatively impact workplace culture and even damage the public image of the institution (Kalleberg, 2008). Organizations that fail to consider the alignment between employees' educational backgrounds and their job roles may struggle to achieve their long-term goals. Educational institutions need to pay attention to the programs they offer to students. This can be achieved by developing higher education curricula that take

into account input from stakeholders, ensuring relevance (link and match) between the content and strategies developed by educational institutions and the demands of the labor market or business needs (Rasyid, 2018).

Conclusion

This study indicates that the majority of alumni from the Indonesian Literature Study Program who graduated in the last two years have successfully entered the workforce, with 78% of participants stating that the courses they took are relevant to their current jobs. However, 22% reported that their jobs are entirely unrelated to their field of study. This suggests a mismatch between education and employment, influenced by the competitive job market and saturation, leading employers to expect graduates to possess specific skills.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the Indonesian Literature Study Program has been relatively successful in preparing graduates for workforce participation, as reflected in the high employment rate and the substantial proportion of graduates working in occupations related to their academic background. Nevertheless, challenges remain regarding employment quality, income levels, and occupational mismatch. These findings suggest that curriculum development should focus not only on disciplinary knowledge but also on strengthening transferable skills, professional networking opportunities, and career readiness competencies to improve graduate competitiveness in an increasingly dynamic labor market.

However, this study has limitations, particularly regarding the number of alumni who could be traced, as many alumni were not reachable. Additionally, the researcher acknowledges that a tracer study is a longitudinal study that requires a longer period to obtain more representative and accurate data. Therefore, further research with a broader data collection and over a longer period is needed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the alignment between alumni education and employment.

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