



## Needs Analysis of the Bengkulu Community Through the Lens of Local Culture

Saepudin<sup>1,\*</sup>, M. Azizullah Ilyas<sup>2</sup>, Edi Sumanto<sup>2</sup>, Meri Lestari<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Postgraduate of Islamic Education Program, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia

<sup>2,3</sup>Ushuluddin, Adab and Dakwa Faculty, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup>Tarbiyah dan Tadris Faculty, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** Graduate profiles that do not match the needs of the world of work in a community environment based on local culture are one of the problems for prospective teachers. This research aims to analyze local culture-based community responses regarding the development of prospective teachers' skills.

**Methodology:** This research used a mixed-method approach with primary data from questionnaires and secondary data from observations, interviews, and documentation.

**Main Findings:** This study revealed that out of a sample of 100 students, 83.33% responded positively to the implementation of status changes. Additionally, 65% of the community acknowledged that the status change would lead to a greater variety of academic programs. Meanwhile, 9% of the community believed that this change would contribute to improved welfare, and 75.5% recognized its overall benefits. Insights from stakeholder interviews led to the recommendation of five study programs, while surveys of 11th and 12th-grade prospective students identified ten preferred study programs.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The novelty of this research lies in its integration of local cultural perspectives into the needs analysis for developing study programs in Islamic universities. Unlike conventional needs assessments that focus solely on market demands, this study uniquely examines how cultural values and community expectations shape the required competencies of prospective teachers.

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### Corresponding Author:

Saepudin,

Postgraduate of Islamic Education Program, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu,

Pagar Dewa, Selebar, Bengkulu, Bengkulu, 38211, Indonesia

Email: [saepudin@mail.uinfasbengkulu.ac.id](mailto:saepudin@mail.uinfasbengkulu.ac.id)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, progress in the development of artificial intelligence technology has increased and is used globally, thus greatly influencing various industries, infrastructure, social activities, and other human activities [1]. The rapid development of technology has caused changes in society's values [2]-[4]. The new values technological developments create are called Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 [5]-[8]. These developments inevitably require the world of education, including universities, to also make adjustments to prepare the education society needs. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has issued the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy, which Islamic Universities, especially State Islamic Universities, must also respond to at the curriculum level and the opening of new study programs.

Education is a process and pattern that leads to achieving goals[9], [10]. Furthermore, education is expected to be ideal and respond to the challenges of current life developments. Islamic education in Indonesia is part of national education, which aims to create perfect or complete human beings [11], so education must reflect the direction of Indonesian human development [12]-[14]. It cannot be separated from religious education as the foundation for how they think, behave, and solve problems that are neatly arranged in the national education system[15]-[17]. Exemplary character is the most important educational tool in Islamic education. Therefore, it is the duty of educators, both parents and teachers, to introduce and teach developments in science and technology.

The phenomenon of backwardness in Islamic society for an extended period since the 18th century forced Muslims to make confident choices if they wanted to develop knowledge again, for example, by developing the quality of education and higher education. Furthermore, through higher education, the mass production of intellectuals with multiple qualities expected to become actors of change can be achieved [18]. On the internal side, readiness to develop study programs is also an aspect that must be prepared. The readiness of human resources and any new study programs needed by society and the world of work must be explored and concluded. This data on the needs of society and stakeholders can later be used as a consideration for universities to determine policies, what the needs of society are, what the needs of the world of work are, and how prepared campus resources are.

Local cultural values are values or traditions that are agreed upon and embedded in a society [19], [20]. We must maintain and preserve these cultural values so they remain and are remembered by future generations [21]. From that, cultural values in the local area can be applied to support the development of study programs at the Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu State Islamic University (UIN). Analysis of community needs based on local culture is critical to implement because the development of study programs must follow demands from society to benefit religion and the country. There are aspects of needs that can be analyzed, such as biological needs, safety needs, needs for esteem, social needs, and self-actualization needs [22], [23]. Humans also have future needs, which are anticipations of the development of human life in the future [24]. In education, study programs that are projected to be needed in the future must be prepared through needs analysis to anticipate societal developments. Needs can arise due to internal factors but can also be stimulated by external factors such as the environment [25]-[27].

Needs analysis is an activity to find various things that society needs. Analysis can be carried out to determine needs. The difference between actual and required conditions or conditions that should occur is mapped using needs analysis [28] so that the gaps can be described and solutions that can be taken to overcome these problems can be concluded [29]. The purpose of needs analysis is to provide information for planning and diagnosing, or identifying problems [30]. In addition, the macro-level needs assessment model examines the gap between the ideal and actual quality of a product provided by an organization to other parties, especially users. This model aims to analyze products organizations provide through program output to other parties, such as society and stakeholders [31]. A need is also often referred to as gaps that occur in society, where these gaps are different from what is expected. These gaps can occur in results, achievements, or consequences[31]. Therefore, to identify these needs, it is necessary to start by determining the gaps that occur so that the expected solutions can be formulated. Fact and fiction must be separated to provide actual recommendations [32]. Needs analysis systematically determines suggestions, identifies gaps between targets and real conditions, and determines actions [24].

Statistics Indonesia data shows that labour availability is shifting to various service sectors, ranging from construction, finance, and transportation to health and education. This phenomenon should be one of the cornerstones of the policy for opening study programs. The highest open unemployment report also occurred among diploma I, II, and III graduates, which reached 6.89%, above high school unemployment of 6.78%. There is 6.24% open unemployment for university diploma holders with at least a bachelor's degree. Educated unemployment is a phenomenon in itself. Open unemployment data in 2019 put Bengkulu at 2.50%. The unemployment rate in August 2020 experienced a significant increase compared to a year ago, amounting to 2.97%. Based on gender, the underemployment rate for men (14.06 percentage points) is higher than for women (11.60 percentage points) [33].

The Open Unemployment Rate (*Tingkat Pengangguran Terbuka/TPT*) is an indicator used to measure labour not absorbed by businesses in the job market. Bengkulu's TPT results from Sakernas in August 2020 were 4.07%. This percentage means that out of 100 people in the workforce, there are around four unemployed people. The TPT value has increased compared to a year ago by 0.81 percentage points [34]. At the stage of curriculum preparation outlined in the MB-KM Directorate General of Higher Education 2020, a needs analysis was carried out to look at social, professional, and industrial needs as a basis for curriculum development [35]. Needs analysis (market signals) is the primary basis besides the Science Vision (science and technology studies) in the curriculum document preparation stage [36]. In responding to this problem, activities and analyses are needed to provide data for policymakers to decide on the needs of society, stakeholders, and the world of work regarding opening specific study programs [37]. Needs analysis can be a basis for developing community

resources. Needs analysis is done to analyze gaps, identify needs, and determine the right solution; it is a complex process [32]. Every study program needs to be developed considering the challenges of the future, which are much more complex than they are now. Education must be designed to plan future needs with all the consequences that arise. Education also plays a strategic role in predicting and measuring the desired future with various logical considerations. No less interesting, education should not prepare people for something else or be a byproduct of other activities [38]. Education must be intended to help humans gain and maintain power over themselves, society, and their environment [39].

Therefore, the development of study programs should be openly and clearly formulated to provide space for an elastic, directed, holistic, and non-discriminatory movement toward an independent, professional, and competitive school education process [40]. From this explanation, it appears that investment in education is a very long chain and involves the issue of educational maturation responsibility, religiosity, realizing the desired vision of society, and the tendency to live socially [41], [42]. It follows research results refined by the research team, such as simplifying the language, adapting content to local settings, and ensuring that program materials are exciting and relevant for developing stress reduction programs in rural society [43].

The culture embedded in society and passed down from generation to generation will become increasingly conceptualized in people's lives so that it becomes a belief in things related to a belief that is not easy to eradicate. Various cultures give rise to many characteristics, especially when an area has people with various cultures. An example is the Bengkulu community, which is heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity. The population consists of indigenous tribes and immigrants [40]. The native tribes of Bengkulu are Rejang, Serawai, Mukomuko, Enggano, Kaur, Lembak, Pekal, Besemah, Semende, Merpas, Nasal, and Malay Bengkulu. Among the native tribes, the Rejang and Serawai have the highest populations, with percentages of 20.60% and 18.91%, respectively. The Javanese as immigrants are the largest single ethnic population in Bengkulu Province, with a percentage of 22.64%. Meanwhile, the local tribes are Malay, Minangkabau, Batak, Sundanese, and Lampung.

A GAP analysis reveals disparities between existing study programs and the skills required by the workforce. Bengkulu's economy, driven by agriculture, trade, health services, and education, demands graduates equipped with interdisciplinary expertise. However, current program offerings may not fully align with industry and societal needs. Data from Statistics Indonesia highlights that the highest open unemployment rates are found among diploma and university graduates, indicating a mismatch between education and labor market expectations. Additionally, the heterogeneous socio-cultural composition of Bengkulu, with a mix of indigenous and immigrant communities, underscores the need for education that integrates local cultural values while addressing global technological shifts.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to formulate data-driven strategies to align higher education with economic and social development. Without a structured approach to program development, Islamic universities risk producing graduates who struggle to integrate into the job market. A targeted needs analysis will provide empirical evidence for policymaking, ensuring curriculum relevance, workforce preparedness, and sustainable regional development. Thus, education as an investment must be designed according to users' needs to allow them to act intelligently and wisely. Seeing this reality, research on the prospects for developing prospective Islamic teachers in the Bengkulu community is significant. It is hoped that the results of this research can help analyze the needs of the job market in Bengkulu to find out the needs, challenges, and job prospects of prospective Islamic teachers in Bengkulu as evaluation material for the development of better prospective Islamic teachers in the future. Given the lack of data on community needs, stakeholder expectations, and labor market demands for study programs at UIN Fatmawati, conducting a needs analysis to collect relevant information becomes crucial. The gathered data will serve as a foundation for policy-making in establishing and expanding new study programs.

This study aims to explore public perceptions of the transformation of IAIN Bengkulu into UIN Fatmawati Sukarno, particularly in terms of its impact and acceptance within the community. The research seeks to identify the study programs that the public expects to be offered at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno and to map the labor market needs in Bengkulu Province in relation to the availability of study programs in higher education institutions. The objectives of this study are threefold: first, to gather public responses regarding the status change of IAIN to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno; second, to determine which study programs are most needed and expected to be established at the university; and third, to analyze labor market demands in Bengkulu Province to ensure alignment between educational offerings and workforce needs.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a mixed-method research approach for several reasons. First, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods enables a broader perspective beyond the constraints of theoretical frameworks typically confined to specific disciplines [44]. This approach fosters innovative and interdisciplinary thinking. Additionally, mixed-method research integrates various methodologies either sequentially or simultaneously to generate more comprehensive and reliable findings compared to single-method approaches

[45]. By combining these techniques, this study can effectively examine the complex dynamics of human and social interactions, allowing certain aspects and relationships to be assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively [46].

This research used a mixed-method approach that combines positivism and post-positivism [47]. This approach involves the functions of the two research approaches collectively so that the overall strength of this research is more remarkable than qualitative and quantitative research and more complete than just collecting and analyzing two types of data. This approach also involves quantitative and qualitative approaches, philosophical assumptions, and mixing both approaches in one study simultaneously. The sample in this research was 1200 students, 200 stakeholders, and 100 university students. A stratified random sampling technique was used for students to ensure diverse representation across academic levels. Meanwhile, purposive sampling was applied to stakeholders and community members to select individuals with relevant insights into the institutional transition.

The study used questionnaires, structured interviews, and document analysis as data collection instruments. The student and community questionnaires assessed their perceptions of the status change and the necessity for new study programs. Stakeholder interviews gathered expert opinions on academic program recommendations. Document analysis examined institutional policies and labor market needs. The questionnaire was adapted from previous research [48] and modified for this study [49].

Table 1. Instrument grid

Aspect	Indicator	Total items
Perception of status change	Knowledge about UIN Fatmawati Sukarno transformation	3
	Acceptance and perceived benefits of the status change	2
	Changes in study programs, facilities, and reputation	3
Study Program Needs	Fields of study needed	2
	Industry relevance	2
Relevance to Islamic Values	Integration of religious values in education	3
Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	.938

Primary data was collected through surveys and interviews, while secondary data was gathered from institutional reports, labor market studies, and policy documents. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentage distributions and mean analysis, to interpret student and community responses [47]. The qualitative data from interviews was examined using thematic analysis, identifying key themes related to program recommendations and institutional transition impacts. By integrating these methods, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how institutional status changes align with societal needs and educational development in the 4.0 industrial era.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bengkulu is a province in Sumatra at coordinates 5°40' – 2° 0' South Latitude 40' – 104° 0' East Longitude with an area of 19,788.70 km<sup>2</sup> (7,640.46). This province borders West Sumatra to the north, Lampung to the south, the Indian Ocean to the west, and Jambi and South Sumatra to the east. The eastern part of Bengkulu province is hilly with fertile highlands, while the western part is narrow lowlands extending from north to south with several undulating parts. There are ten islands in the geographical area of Bengkulu. One island is in Bengkulu City, and the other nine are in North Bengkulu Regency, one of which is the largest island in Bengkulu Province, Enggano Island.

After Indonesian independence, Bengkulu was once a residence in South Sumatra Province. Only since 18 November 1968 has its status been upgraded to become the 26th youngest province after East Timor. Bengkulu Province, which was formed based on Law no. 9 of 1967, covers the former Bengkulu Residency area of 19,813 km<sup>2</sup> and consists of four Level II Regions: Bengkulu Municipality with two sub-districts, North Bengkulu Regency (Argamakmur capital) with 13 sub-districts, South Bengkulu Regency (Manna capital) with 11 sub-districts, and Rejang Lebong Regency (Curup capital) with ten sub-districts. In its development, after experiencing several expansions at the district level, there are nine regencies and one municipality in Bengkulu Province. The regional potential of Bengkulu province is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Regional Potential of Bengkulu Province

No	City/Regency	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	2021 Population (in thousands)
1	Bengkulu City	151,70	378,6
2	Central Bengkulu Regency	1.223,94	118,1
3	South Bengkulu Regency	1.186,10	168,0
4	North Bengkulu Regency	4.234,60	299,4
5	Kaur Regency	2.369,05	128,0
6	Kepahiang Regency	665,00	151,6
7	Lebong Regency	1.921,82	106,8
8	Rejang Lebong Regency	1.639,98	278,8
9	Muko Muko Regency	4.036,70	193,2
10	Seluma Regency	2.400,44	210,5

The change of IAIN Bengkulu into UIN is one of the achievements that has impacted the development of science education in Bengkulu province as the only state campus in Bengkulu city. It will contribute by opening more comprehensive study programs, accommodating more students, and providing more sources of knowledge. The change gave rise to responses from IAIN internal circles, the academic community, the community, and stakeholders. From respondent data after interviews with 100 students to gather responses about the status change from IAIN to UIN, 83.33% of students responded positively, while the rest (16.67%) responded negatively.

In providing a more in-depth picture of the public response to the status change, a SWOT analysis was carried out first to determine the relationship between the needs of the Bengkulu people and the factual conditions at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno. After that, appropriate steps can be taken to meet the public real needs. Data was collected based on secondary data through a purposive public survey to see their response to the change from IAIN Bengkulu to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno. Each district was represented by 20 people, including residents and community leaders. The following two indicators were compiled To understand the public response to status change from IAIN to UIN: the level of the public understanding of the benefits of status change from IAIN to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno and the level of public support for status change from IAIN to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno.

The results of a questionnaire review regarding the public understanding of the benefits of status change from IAIN to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Public Understanding of Status Change Benefit

No	City/Regency	Status Change Benefit		
		Providing various study program	Providing workers in various fields	Improving welfare
1	Bengkulu City	70	20	10
2	Rejang Lebong Regency	85	15	-
3	Kepahiang Regency	65	30	5
4	Lebong Regency	55	35	10
5	Seluma Regency	65	35	-
6	South Bengkulu Regency	65	35	-
7	Kaur Regency	85	15	-
8	Argamakmur Regency	55	30	15
9	North Bengkulu Regency	75	15	10
10	Muko-Muko Regency	45	35	20

From Table 3, the public understanding of the benefits of changing IAIN status to UIN is based on the knowledge that status change will provide various study programs (65%), while those who understand further that status change will have a long-term impact on providing workers in various fields are 26.5%. People who believe that changing status will improve welfare are 30%.

Meanwhile, the response in community support for the status change is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Public Understanding of Status Change Benefit

No	City/Regency	Status Change Benefit	
		Beneficial	Unbeneficial
1	Bengkulu City	100	-
2	Rejang Lebong Regency	95	5
3	Kepahiang Regency	65	35
4	Lebong Regency	70	30
5	Seluma Regency	65	35
6	South Bengkulu Regency	75	25
7	Kaur Regency	65	35
8	Argamakmur Regency	80	20
9	North Bengkulu Regency	80	20
10	Muko-Muko Regency	75	25

From Table 4, 75.5% of the public assess that the status change from IAIN Bengkulu to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno benefits the community, while the remainder (24.4%) assesses that this status change provides no benefits. After conducting an in-depth investigation, people who hold this opinion believe that Universitas Bengkulu has provided study programs that are not provided at UIN, so they are considered complementary. They then advised UIN to open study programs unavailable at Universitas Bengkulu.

This is a reasonable concern, in line with previous research stating that worries about a decline in education quality are also a significant challenge in this transformation process. Some parties believe that expanding the focus and scope of study programs may reduce the quality of education offered by the institution, especially if it is not accompanied by an increase in resources and adequate support. Therefore, it is crucial for transforming institutions to ensure that the changes implemented do not compromise the existing quality of education[50].

### Stakeholders' Opinion on Status Change

Besides the public response, stakeholders' opinions on higher education development are also important. In-depth interviews must be conducted to see how graduate users and stakeholders view the status change. A stakeholder has a positive or negative influence on activities and a particular interest. Stakeholders and universities have a reciprocal relationship that supports and strengthens each other. So, in essence, higher education does not stand and develop alone but develops together with society and contributes directly to government and society and the reciprocal relationship between stakeholders, government, and universities.

Stakeholders are classified into internal and external. Internal stakeholders include lecturers, education staff, students, and parents. Meanwhile, external stakeholders include groups or organizations outside higher education institutions, such as government, communities, social institutions, graduate users, and training institutions. All parties have their role in improving the quality of education in higher education. This research aimed to gather this information by targeting the Department of Manpower and Transmigration, Statistics Indonesia, and Businessmen. Data is selected and grouped as material for future development of UIN Fatmawati Sukarno.

Kepahiang Regency stakeholder data is concluded in several aspects, highlighting the status change from IAIN to UIN. Stakeholders hope that the development of UIN will consider natural resources in districts in Bengkulu province so that the potential that is available but cannot be utilized optimally due to the lack of skilled human resources can be covered. The plantation aspect is one of the main potentials in Kepahiang district. An example of the available potential is large areas of land suitable for tea, coffee, and pepper. Kepahiang Regency also has quite large and unexplored andesite mining resources and the Bukit Hitam biothermal. Based on several interviews, Kepahiang Regency needs more study programs in agriculture, plantation, and mining product processing.

South Bengkulu Regency, based on in-depth interviews, it can be described that the community needs education that is of interest. It is hoped that general study programs can be opened at UIN while still paying attention to religious values. Religious elements and morals are emphasized as an added value apart from good quality education. Apart from that, society needs study programs that interest women. The availability of more affordable health services is also a problem in society, so it is hoped that UIN can open nursing, midwifery, and medicine study programs at more affordable costs. Several Islamic schools hope that the graduation standards at UIN in general study programs can be prioritized for Religious High Schools, considering that the high standards set at general universities make it difficult for alums of Religious High Schools and Islamic Boarding Schools to pass and enter majors or study programs in science and technology.

Meanwhile, in Mukomuko Regency, there is quite a large area of oil palm plantation land available. Mukomuko is one of the districts with the highest palm oil productivity in Bengkulu Province. This condition requires learning resources that focus on the palm oil sector. An interview with the Department of Manpower

and Transmigration hopes that UIN can open a palm oil department. Palm oil is Mukomuko's mainstay commodity. With high productivity, palm oil processing is not only limited to CPO but also extends to cooking oil. Apart from that, UIN is also expected to collaborate with Balai Latihan Kerja (BLK) or prepare BLK on campus as a forum to provide additional skills for students according to the interests and needs of society and the world of work. The Seluma Regency Manpower and Transmigration Office hopes that UIN can open an agricultural science study program. Also, engineering study programs in managing industrial machines are needed.

Rejang Lebong Regency, with its extensive plantation and agricultural areas, requires agricultural, livestock, and fisheries study programs. Apart from that, production results from the district have not been marketed widely due to the lack of human resource capacity to manage production results well. The unemployment rate of 3.7% in Rejang Lebong is a problem amidst sufficient land and natural production availability. One of the needs of society is to have a creative economy study program with massive collaboration in improving skills with Balai Latihan Kerja (BLK). Apart from that, by changing its status, UIN is expected to maintain good character and mental values so that it does not eliminate religion but still maintains it and builds entrepreneurial character. The problem faced in society is that many graduates who are not employees cannot develop themselves because of the lack of entrepreneurial character instilled on campus. Apart from stakeholders, the needs and desires of prospective students are also part of the needs analysis. Samples were taken from 1200 students from 22 high schools (MAN and SMA) in 10 districts and cities in Bengkulu Province. Of the 1200 samples, 789 students (65.75%) chose the study program offered in the questionnaire with a margin of error of 2% (confidence level 95%), as shown in Figure 1.

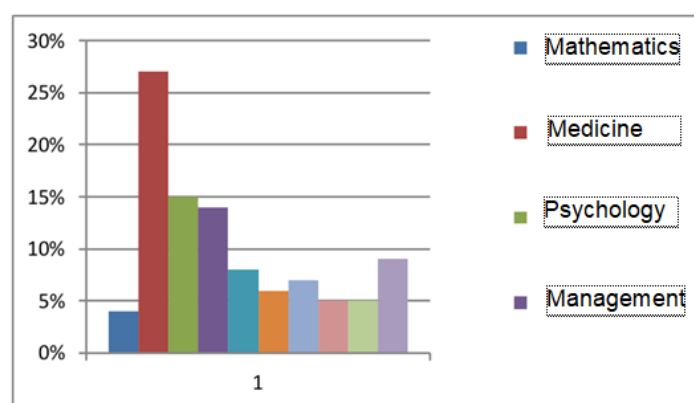


Figure 1. Study Program Chosen by Respondents

Based on the data in the table, it can be concluded that understanding community needs is essential to align graduates with the study programs offered by higher education institutions. This aligns with previous research, which states that the relevance of education refers to the degree of alignment between program objectives and outcomes, assessed through normative ideal standards supported by the accuracy of input, process, and output elements. The relevance of higher education for students is closely related to how graduates adapt to and participate in the workforce. A higher education institution is considered relevant if all or at least the majority of its graduates can quickly be absorbed into the job market in fields that match their discipline and level, whether at the local, national, or international level. The absorption rate of graduates into the workforce largely depends on the quality of graduates, which is built upon the strong integration of skills, knowledge, and competencies[38].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, Bengkulu Province has significant geographical and economic potential, with diverse natural resources that can be leveraged for regional development. The change in status from IAIN Bengkulu to UIN Fatmawati Sukarno has been widely accepted, with 83.33% of students and 75.5% of the general public responding positively. This transformation is expected to enhance the availability of study programs, align education with local economic needs, and contribute to human resource development. Public and stakeholder opinions indicate a strong need for study programs related to mathematics, management, psychology, and health sciences. These programs should be designed to support Bengkulu's key economic sectors, such as education, business, healthcare, and social services.. Additionally, stakeholders emphasize the importance of integrating religious values with general education to maintain UIN's unique identity.

In conclusion, the transformation of UIN Fatmawati Sukarno presents an opportunity to enhance higher education accessibility, support local industries, and foster economic growth in Bengkulu. Strategic planning

should focus on aligning academic offerings with labor market demands, ensuring that graduates are well-equipped for both employment and entrepreneurship while maintaining strong religious and moral foundations. The transformation of UIN Fatmawati Sukarno is expected to have long-term socioeconomic impacts on Bengkulu. By aligning academic programs with regional economic sectors, the university can contribute to workforce development, reduce unemployment rates, and promote innovation in key industries. Additionally, the integration of religious values with modern education can shape graduates into well-rounded professionals with ethical and moral integrity. This shift also provides an opportunity for Bengkulu to strengthen its position as an educational hub in Sumatra, attracting students from various regions and fostering cross-regional collaborations. However, successful implementation will require continuous stakeholder engagement, investment in infrastructure, and adaptive curriculum development to meet evolving industry demands.

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