

Correlation Analysis of High School Major, Academic Achievement, Major Choice in SPAN, University Study Program, and Cumulative Grade Point Average of Achieving Students via the SPAN Pathway at UIN Mataram

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between high school major, academic and non-academic achievement, major choice through the National Academic Achievement Selection (SPAN) PTKIN pathway, the major pursued at the university, and the Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram. This research uses a quantitative approach with a correlational research type. The research location is UIN Mataram, with a sample size of 1,768 students admitted through the SPAN pathway. Data collection techniques were carried out through surveys and documentation of student academic data, including data on high school major, academic/non-academic achievement, SPAN major choice, university major, and GPA. Research instruments included questionnaires and academic data documentation sheets sourced from official institutional archives. Data analysis techniques used Pearson Product Moment correlation tests to determine the relationship between research variables. The results show a positive and significant correlation between major choice in SPAN and the major pursued at UIN Mataram, as well as a negative and significant correlation between university major and student GPA. Additionally, a negative and significant correlation was found between major choice in SPAN and academic/non-academic achievement in high school. Meanwhile, no significant relationship was

found between high school major and university major, high school achievement, or GPA, and no significant relationship was found between academic/non-academic achievement and GPA. The implications of this research indicate that students' academic success in higher education is not solely determined by their major and achievement at the secondary education level but is more influenced by the suitability of major choice, characteristics of the study program, and the learning context in higher education. These findings can serve as a basis for developing more comprehensive, interest- and potential-based student selection policies and career guidance services.

Keywords: High School Major; Academic and Non-Academic Achievement; SPAN PTKIN Major Choice; University Major; Grade Point Average

INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays a strategic role in developing superior, competitive, and character-driven human resources. Universities are required not only to produce academically intelligent graduates but also those with strong competencies, adaptability, and moral integrity (Nawawi, M., & Aliyyah, R. R. 2024). The quality of university graduates is largely determined by the quality of student input, effective learning processes, and the compatibility between students' educational backgrounds and their chosen fields of study. Mismatches in any of these aspects can potentially lead to academic problems, such as low academic performance, delayed studies, or even dropping out (Hamda, S. 2019). In the Indonesian national education system, the new student admission mechanism is a crucial instrument in ensuring the quality of university input. The government, through various policies, has developed selection pathways oriented towards academic achievement as a primary indicator of potential success in university studies. One such selection pathway is the National Academic Achievement Selection (SPAN) for State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) (Yusrie, C. S., Ernawati, E., Suherman, D., & Barlian, U. C. 2021).

The SPAN pathway is designed to recruit high-achieving students from high schools, madrasah aliyah, and vocational schools based on report card grades and other academic achievements during their studies at their original schools. Conceptually, achievement-based selection stems from educational psychology theory, which states that previous academic achievement is a strong predictor of academic success at the next educational level. The theory of achievement continuity explains that individuals who show consistent academic

achievement tend to have more stable learning skills, motivation, and cognitive abilities (Hendrilia, 2025). Therefore, high-achieving students who pass through the SPAN pathway are assumed to have the potential to achieve good academic performance in higher education, reflected in their Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA).

However, academic achievement in higher education is not solely determined by report card grades or student rankings in their original schools. Other equally important factors include the secondary education background, especially the high school major, and the suitability of that major with the chosen study program at the university (Astuti, M. Y., Sari, I. P., & Fahmi, R. A. 2020). In Indonesian secondary education, students are divided into several majors, such as Natural Sciences (IPA), Social Sciences (IPS), Language, and various vocational competencies in Vocational High Schools (SMK). Each major has different curriculum characteristics, cognitive loads, and competency emphases.

These differences in high school major characteristics theoretically imply students' academic readiness when entering higher education. Readiness learning theory states that learning success is highly influenced by students' initial readiness, both in terms of prerequisite knowledge, thinking skills, and learning habits (Silangen, P. V. A., Mamentu, M. D., & Dolonseda, H. P. 2025). Students from the IPA major, for example, tend to be more prepared for study programs that demand logical abilities, quantitative analysis, and understanding of scientific concepts. Conversely, students from IPS or religious majors may have advantages in aspects of social analysis, humanities, and normative understanding, but face challenges in science-based or statistics courses.

On the other hand, the choice of study program in higher education is also a crucial factor influencing students' academic achievement. A study program that aligns with students' interests, talents, and academic backgrounds will facilitate the learning adaptation process and increase intrinsic motivation. Conversely, a mismatch between the high school background and the academic demands of the study program can potentially lead to learning shock, decreased motivation, and low academic achievement. Therefore, the relationship between high school major, initial academic achievement, study program choice, and student GPA is an important issue that needs to be scientifically examined (Ananda, A., Masyithah, Q., & Syam, H. 2025).

In State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN), especially the State Islamic University (UIN) Mataram, this issue becomes even more relevant. UIN Mataram, as an

Islamic higher education institution, has diverse study program characteristics, ranging from Islamic studies, social-humanities, education, to science and technology. This diversity of study programs opens opportunities for students from various school backgrounds to pursue education but also presents challenges in ensuring academic compatibility between student input and study program demands.

High-achieving students admitted through the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram have formally met academic criteria based on report card grades and school recommendations. However, in practice, there has been no comprehensive empirical study on the extent to which high school major and academic achievement correlate with study program choices and student GPA during their studies at UIN Mataram. This information is crucial as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the SPAN pathway in recruiting students who are not only excellent during selection but also capable of maintaining academic achievement in higher education.

Initial observations of academic data for high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram show a tendency for students from certain majors to be more dominant in specific study programs and to have a relatively higher average GPA. For example, students with an IPA background tend to show more stable academic performance in science-based and science education study programs, while students from IPS or religious majors show greater GPA variations when entering study programs that require quantitative competencies. Although this observation is preliminary and descriptive, these findings indicate a relationship that needs to be further investigated statistically and systematically.

Furthermore, initial observations also show that not all high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway choose study programs that align with their high school major. External factors such as job opportunity considerations, environmental influence, and limited academic information often affect students' study program choices. This condition can potentially lead to academic mismatch, impacting students' GPA and study continuity. Therefore, a comprehensive correlational analysis is needed to understand the patterns of relationships between these variables.

Based on these problems, this study offers a scientific solution in the form of a correlation analysis between high school major, academic achievement, university study program, and Cumulative Grade Point Average of high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram. The correlational approach was chosen because it can reveal the

degree and direction of relationships between variables objectively and measurably, making this research not only descriptive but also analytical in explaining the academic relationship patterns that occur.

The urgency of this research lies in several strategic aspects. First, theoretically, this research contributes to the development of higher education studies, particularly regarding predictors of student academic success based on secondary education background. The results of this study can enrich the academic literature on the continuity of academic achievement from secondary to higher education in the context of PTKIN. Second, practically, this research provides an empirical basis for universities in evaluating new student admission policies for the SPAN pathway, especially regarding the compatibility between high school major and study program. Third, from an educational policy perspective, the results of this research can serve as a reference for strengthening academic guidance and counseling systems for prospective students. Information on the correlation between high school major, academic achievement, and GPA can be used to provide more appropriate study program recommendations, thereby minimizing the risk of academic failure. Fourth, for students, this research provides an objective overview of the factors influencing study success, which can increase academic awareness in planning higher education. To limit this study, the researcher focuses on the research objective, which is to explain the correlation of high school major, academic achievement, university study program, and cumulative grade point average of high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram.

METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach with a correlational type. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to obtain data from a relatively large population efficiently and provides an opportunity to conduct correlational analysis that can describe the empirical relationships between research variables (Pandiangan, D. F., & Albina, M. (2025)). The survey method is considered relevant for this research because it aims to identify and analyze the relationships between high school major, academic achievement, SPAN choices, university study programs, and cumulative grade point average objectively and measurably.

Through this approach, data was collected using research instruments in the form of questionnaires for the UIN Mataram SPAN evaluation, which included various components

such as high school major, academic achievement, SPAN choices, university major, and GPA, or documents containing new student data at UIN Mataram. The students who were the object of the research were those from the 2022, 2023, and 2024 cohorts.

This research was conducted at the State Islamic University of Mataram. The research population included students from the 2022, 2023, and 2024 cohorts. The sampling technique used was random sampling based on the Isaac and Michael table reference as explained by Sugiyono, with a significance level of 5%. Based on this calculation, the determined sample size was 1768.

The collected data was then analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation test. This analysis was chosen to further examine the direction of the relationship between variables, whether it is positive or negative (Jabnabillah, F., & Margina, N. 2022). This correlation test can be performed if the data is normally distributed. If the data is not normally distributed, the researcher will perform a Spearman correlation test. The decision-making basis for this correlation test is:

1. If the Sig (2-tailed) value < 0.05 , then there is a significant relationship.
2. If the Sig (2-tailed) value > 0.05 , then there is no significant relationship.

Furthermore, to see the degree of the relationship, the researcher refers to Table 1.

Table 1. Degree of Relationship/Correlation (Wulandari, I. (2024)

Correlation Value	Degree of Relationship
0.00-0.199	Very Weak
0.20-0.399	Weak
0.40-0.599	Moderate/Sufficient
0.60-0.799	Strong
0.80-1.00	Very Strong

In addition to seeing the level and strength of the relationship between variables, researchers can also see the direction of the relationship by observing the positive and negative values of the correlation. If the value is positive, the relationship is in the same direction, while if it is negative, the relationship is inverse.

RESULTS

This study aimed to explain the correlation of high school major, academic achievement, major choice in SPAN, university study program, and cumulative grade point average of high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram. The correlation test refers to the product moment correlation test table, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation Test

Correlations						
		MAJOR	SPAN CHOICE	HIGH SCHOOL MAJOR	ACADEMIC/NON-ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	GPA
MAJOR	Pearson Correlation	1	.127**	.032	.017	-.182**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.180	.476	.000
	N	1768	1768	1768	1768	1768
SPAN CHOICE	Pearson Correlation	.127**	1	-.002	-.060*	-.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.943	.012	.423
	N	1768	1768	1768	1768	1768
HIGH SCHOOL MAJOR	Pearson Correlation	.032	-.002	1	-.008	.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.943		.751	.709
	N	1768	1768	1768	1768	1768
ACADEMIC/NON-ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	Pearson Correlation	.017	-.060*	-.008	1	-.017
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.476	.012	.751		.472
	N	1768	1768	1768	1768	1768
GPA	Pearson Correlation	-.182**	-.019	.009	-.017	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.423	.709	.472	
	N	1768	1768	1768	1768	1768

Table 2 shows the relationship/correlation between high school major, academic achievement, major choice in SPAN, university study program, and cumulative grade point

average of high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram. The interpretation of Table 2 can be further explained as follows:

1. There is a correlation/relationship between the major at UIN Mataram and the major choice in SPAN PTKIN, referring to a significant value of $0.000 < 5\%$ significance level. The Pearson Correlation value is 0.127 (positive). This means the direction of the relationship is consistent.
2. There is no correlation/relationship between the major taken at UIN Mataram and the high school major, referring to a significant value of $0.180 > 5\%$ significance level.
3. There is no correlation/relationship between the major and achievement during high school, referring to a significant value of $0.476 > 5\%$ significance level.
4. There is a correlation/relationship between the major at UIN Mataram and GPA, referring to a significant value of $0.000 < 5\%$ significance level. The Pearson Correlation value is -0.187 (negative). This means the direction of the relationship is inverse.
5. There is no correlation/relationship between the choice in SPAN and the high school major, referring to a significant value of $0.943 > 5\%$ significance level.
6. There is a correlation/relationship between the choice in SPAN and achievement during high school, referring to a significant value of $0.012 < 5\%$ significance level. The Pearson Correlation value is -0.060 (negative). This means the direction of the relationship is inverse.
7. There is no correlation/relationship between the choice in SPAN and GPA, referring to a significant value of $0.423 > 5\%$ significance level.
8. There is no correlation/relationship between high school major and academic and non-academic achievement, referring to a significant value of $0.751 > 5\%$ significance level.
9. There is no correlation/relationship between high school major and GPA, referring to a significant value of $0.709 > 5\%$ significance level.
10. There is no correlation/relationship between academic and non-academic achievement and GPA, referring to a significant value of $0.472 > 5\%$ significance level.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of these research findings aims to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the relationship between high school major, academic and non-academic achievement in school, major choice on the SPAN PTKIN pathway, the major pursued at the university, and the Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of high-achieving students via the SPAN pathway at UIN Mataram. The correlational analysis is not only understood statistically but also contextualized within the theoretical framework of higher education, university admission policies, and the dynamics of academic transition from secondary to higher education.

The first finding shows a positive and significant correlation between major choice in SPAN and the major ultimately pursued by students at UIN Mataram ($r = 0.127$; $p < 0.05$). Although the strength of this correlation is weak, its significance indicates that the major choice made by students at the national selection stage is related to their academic direction in higher education. This suggests that the SPAN PTKIN mechanism is relatively consistent in placing students according to their initial academic preferences. From a rational choice theory perspective, students' decisions in choosing a major through SPAN are the result of considering interests, self-perceived abilities, chances of acceptance, and available information about the study program (Mardhiah, M. 2024). Therefore, although not entirely deterministic, this initial choice remains one of the factors influencing students' academic paths.

This finding is supported by descriptive data showing that 82.35% of students were accepted into their first choice, 16.45% into their second choice, and only 1.18% into their third choice. This pattern indicates that the SPAN system is relatively effective in channeling students according to their initial academic preferences. From a rationality theory perspective, as stated by Wisadirana from Coleman (2024), individuals tend to make educational decisions based on rational considerations that account for chances of success, interests, and self-capacity. The high percentage of acceptance for the first choice indicates that SPAN students at UIN Mataram have undergone a mature self-selection process before deciding on a major. Thus, although the statistical correlation is weak, substantively, the relationship between SPAN choice and the major pursued has significant meaning in the context of higher education admission policies.

The distribution of students by study program also reinforces this finding. Study programs such as Islamic Religious Education (11.42%), Islamic Family Law (6.3%), Islamic Economics (5.8%), Islamic Economic Law (5.4%), Social Sciences Economics (5.2%), and Islamic Banking and English Tadris (5.1% each) show relatively high acceptance rates. This reflects the tendency of SPAN pathway students to choose study programs deemed relevant to social needs, job prospects, and Islamic scientific identity. Conversely, the low percentages in study programs such as Physics (0.9%), Chemistry (0.96%), Astronomy (Ilmu Falak) (1.47%), and PPI (0.97%) indicate that factors such as perceived academic difficulty and career opportunities also influence student preferences. Thus, this study program distribution provides an empirical context that clarifies the correlation pattern between SPAN choice and university major. These research results are also relevant to why Chemistry, Astronomy, and PPI are considered low-interest majors.

However, the weak correlation coefficient also emphasizes that major choice in SPAN is not the sole determinant of the study program students pursue. Other factors such as internal university policies, study program capacity, and student placement strategies also influence the final outcome. This finding aligns with Tinto's research, which states that the transition to higher education is an adaptive process, where students' initial decisions often undergo adjustments along with institutional and academic dynamics (Weliangan, H. 2021).

The second and third findings indicate no significant correlation between the major pursued by students at UIN Mataram and their high school major, nor with academic and non-academic achievement during high school. This finding has important theoretical implications because it challenges the common assumption that the compatibility of high school major with a university study program will determine students' academic choices. In the context of the SPAN PTKIN pathway, these results show that the background of the high school major, whether IPA, IPS, religious, or other, does not directly influence the major pursued in higher education.

These results become more understandable when linked to data on students' high school major backgrounds, which are dominated by IPS (38%) and IPA (35%), followed by Religion (17.5%), Language (6.67%), and General (2.6%). Although the majority of students come from IPS and PAI majors, they do not linearly choose study programs that align with those majors. IPS students are spread across various religious, social, and even exact science study programs, while IPA students also do not all continue to IPA in higher education.

This phenomenon is consistent with the theory of higher education transition proposed by Riyono (2023), which states that higher education is a space for the reconstruction of academic identity, where students are no longer fully bound by their previous educational path. The SPAN pathway provides considerable flexibility for students to undertake academic mobility across disciplines. Therefore, the absence of a correlation between high school major and university major actually shows that the SPAN selection system opens opportunities for students to develop academic potential beyond the structural limitations of secondary education.

This phenomenon can also be explained through the concept of academic reorientation, which is the process of restructuring students' academic orientation when entering the higher education environment. According to Pascarella and Terenzini, universities provide a wider space for students to explore their interests and potential, so that previous academic backgrounds are not always the main determinant (Loise, M., Arsyad, M., & Gani, M. 2025). This is increasingly relevant at UIN Mataram as an Islamic religious university that offers interdisciplinary study programs, so students from various high school majors have relatively equal opportunities to adapt.

The lack of correlation between high school major and academic or non-academic achievement indicates that students' achievement at the secondary education level is more contextual and situational rather than linearly determined by the specialization of the chosen major. High school majors essentially function as administrative and pedagogical groupings to facilitate learning management, not as the sole determinant of students' academic capacity or potential for achievement. Therefore, students from IPS, PAI, Language, or general majors have relatively equal opportunities to achieve high performance, both academic and non-academic, as long as they are in a supportive learning environment and receive adequate educational stimuli.

Theoretically, this finding aligns with the ecological view of education, which places learning achievement as the result of a complex interaction between individuals and the learning environment. Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that student development and achievement are influenced by various interconnected systems, ranging from the classroom environment, school culture, to applicable educational policies (Oktaviana, R., Khiftiyah, U., Yuliani, F., & Utari, W. D. 2023). In this context, the quality of the school, the competence and commitment of teachers, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, and a conducive

academic climate play a much more significant role than the major label alone. Schools with a strong learning culture and structured achievement development systems are able to produce high-achieving students across majors, both in academic and non-academic fields.

Furthermore, academic achievement in high school is highly influenced by the grading system used by each school. Variations in evaluation standards, difficulty levels of questions, and internal grading policies mean that achievement cannot be fully objectively compared across majors or schools. This strengthens the argument that academic achievement at the secondary level reflects students' success in adapting to a particular learning system rather than conceptual readiness for specific fields of study in higher education. In other words, high achievement is not always synonymous with mastery of academic competencies relevant to a particular major in higher education.

Similarly, non-academic achievements such as sports championships, arts, organizational leadership, or religious activities are not directly related to the high school major. Non-academic achievements are more influenced by personal interests, individual talents, family support, and opportunities provided by the school. Students from various majors have relatively equal access to extracurricular activities, so the potential for non-academic achievement develops across disciplines. This explains why no significant relationship was found between high school major and non-academic achievement in this study.

This finding confirms that high school achievement cannot be viewed as the sole indicator of students' readiness to pursue a particular study program. Academic readiness encompasses broader aspects, such as critical thinking skills, independent learning, adaptability to new academic demands, and intrinsic motivation. These aspects are often not fully reflected in academic and non-academic achievements at the secondary school level. Therefore, the absence of correlation found in this study actually strengthens the view that the selection and development process of students in higher education needs to consider a more holistic dimension of learning readiness, not solely relying on majors and formal achievements in secondary education.

The fourth finding, showing a negative and significant correlation between the major pursued at UIN Mataram and students' Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), indicates that differences in study programs are related to variations in students' academic achievement, although the relationship is not linearly positive. A negative correlation value

($r = -0.182$; $p < 0.05$) indicates that in certain majors, GPA tends to be lower compared to other majors, and vice versa. Substantively, this condition cannot be interpreted as a difference in intellectual quality of students across majors, but rather reflects inherent academic characteristics differences in each study program. Each major has different cognitive demands, study loads, and material complexity, thus influencing the pattern of student GPA achievement variably.

GPA is the result of a grading system highly influenced by curriculum design, learning approaches, and evaluation standards applied at the study program level. Ridho from Biggs (2025), through the concept of constructive alignment, emphasizes that student learning achievement is the result of interaction between student characteristics, learning context, and the assessment system used. Study programs with curricula that emphasize high analytical skills, deep conceptual understanding, and complex academic tasks such as research, text analysis, or abstract problem-solving tend to produce different GPA distributions compared to study programs that are more applied or practice-based. Therefore, GPA differences across majors are a logical consequence of differences in academic structure and grading philosophy applied.

This finding strengthens the view that GPA is relative and contextual, so it cannot be used as a single measure to directly compare students' academic performance across majors. The negative correlation that appears actually emphasizes the importance of caution in interpreting GPA as an indicator of students' academic quality. In the context of academic policy and further selection, this finding implies that student achievement assessment should consider the study program background, curriculum characteristics, and applicable grading standards. Thus, the negative correlation between major and GPA does not indicate student weakness, but rather reflects the complexity and diversity of the academic system in higher education, especially at UIN Mataram.

The fifth finding shows no correlation between major choice in SPAN and high school major. This indicates that students' major choices through SPAN are not entirely based on their high school major background. This phenomenon can be interpreted as an indication of increased flexibility and courage among students in making academic choices based on their interests and future aspirations, not merely following a linear path from previous education. If we look at previous data, the highest percentage of students' high school majors were IPS (38%) and IPA (35%). However, the highest percentage of majors

chosen through the SPAN pathway was PAI (11.42%), and majors relevant to high school majors such as Chemistry, Physics, and Biology actually had the lowest percentages as majors of interest to students. This further strengthens this finding.

From the perspective of career development theory proposed by Marzuqi from Super (2024), the end of secondary education is understood as an exploration stage, a crucial period when individuals begin to recognize their interests, values, talents, and career preferences more consciously, although this process is not yet fully stable or final. In this phase, students are still in the process of trying out various possible educational and career options as part of forming their vocational self-concept (Wutsqo, B. U., Rizky, D. M., & Hidayat, D. R. 2020). This self-concept develops dynamically through the interaction of learning experiences, social environment, family expectations, and exposure to educational and career information. Therefore, the choice of major in higher education is not always a linear continuation of the high school major or previous academic achievement, but often a result of new reflection on personal interests and future aspirations. Super emphasizes that a mismatch between academic background in high school and further study choices is a normal phenomenon because, in the exploration phase, individuals are still adjusting between self-perception and the reality of available opportunities. In this context, SPAN pathway students who choose study programs different from their high school major can be understood as individuals who are solidifying their vocational identity, rather than as a form of academic inconsistency. Thus, study choices in higher education reflect a process of career maturation rather than merely a deterministic outcome of previous academic experience.

The sixth finding, which shows a negative and significant correlation between major choice in SPAN and academic and non-academic achievement in high school ($r = -0.060$; $p < 0.05$), although relatively weak in strength, has important substantive meaning in understanding the dynamics of study choices for SPAN pathway students. The negative direction of the correlation indicates that students with higher academic and non-academic achievements do not always choose majors that are socially perceived as the most prestigious, popular, or competitive. This phenomenon confirms that major choice is not linear or mechanistic following achievement alone, but is the result of a more complex process of psychological, social, and contextual considerations. From the perspective of expectancy-value theory proposed by Wardana from Eccles (2019), an individual's academic decisions are determined by the interaction between expectancy for success and the subjective task value attached to a choice. This subjective value includes intrinsic interest, utility value,

attainment value (importance for self-identity), and cost considerations. High-achieving students may have good expectations of success in many fields but choose a particular major because it is considered more personally meaningful, more aligned with their Islamic identity, or more relevant to long-term career plans and social service.

Further support for this finding is also seen from field data showing that most SPAN pathway students were accepted into their first choice (82.35%), while second and third choices were relatively small. This condition indicates that students generally make careful considerations from the beginning in determining their major choice, not just following the logic of "high achievers choose favorite majors." In addition, the distribution of SPAN students across various study programs, including majors not always considered academically elite, such as Ilmu Falak, PMI, PPI, or Da'wah Management, shows that major choice is more influenced by interest alignment, religious value background, and service orientation than merely academic prestige. Field findings also show that many high-achieving students come from IPA and IPS high school majors, but 11.42% of students choose PAI majors, while those choosing exact science majors are below 1%. This strengthens the argument that high-achieving students do not always pursue majors with the highest competition, but rather majors that they feel are most aligned with their values, competencies they wish to develop, and life goals. Thus, this finding challenges deterministic assumptions in higher education selection and emphasizes that academic achievement is only one variable among many factors influencing major choice, especially in the context of religious higher education such as UIN Mataram.

The seventh to tenth findings consistently show no significant correlation between SPAN choice, high school major, and academic/non-academic achievement with student GPA. This finding has very important theoretical implications because it shows that academic success in higher education, represented by GPA, cannot be simply predicted based on pre-admission variables. In higher education studies, this finding aligns with Astin's student engagement theory, which emphasizes that students' academic success is more determined by their active involvement in the learning process during college than by their previous academic background (Mahardika, A. A., & Nurkhin, A. 2024).

Student GPA is more influenced by internal university factors such as teaching quality, student learning strategies, intrinsic motivation, time management, and available academic support. Therefore, the lack of correlation between school achievement and GPA

indicates that higher education is a new arena that demands adaptation and different learning strategies from secondary education.

The results of this study indicate that the SPAN PTKIN pathway at UIN Mataram is relatively inclusive and not biased against high school major background or previous achievement. This strengthens the view that achievement-based higher education admission should be understood as an entry point, not the ultimate determinant of students' academic success. This finding also contributes theoretically by emphasizing that success in higher education is the result of a dynamic process influenced by the interaction between individuals and the academic environment, not merely a linear continuation of past achievements. Thus, this discussion emphasizes that the correlations found, whether significant or not, must be interpreted critically and contextually. The results of this study not only explain the relationships between variables statistically but also provide a deeper understanding of the complexity of educational transitions and the factors influencing the success of SPAN pathway students at UIN Mataram.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between major choice through the SPAN pathway and the major pursued by students at UIN Mataram, indicating consistency between initial choices and the study program undertaken in higher education. However, the high school major does not have a significant relationship with either the university major or with students' academic/non-academic achievement and GPA. Furthermore, the major at UIN Mataram has a negative and significant correlation with GPA, indicating differences in GPA achievement across study programs due to variations in curriculum characteristics and grading systems. Major choice in SPAN also correlates negatively and significantly with high school achievement, although it does not correlate with GPA. Overall, these findings emphasize that high school major background and achievement are not the primary determinants of academic success in higher education, but rather major choice, the context of the study program, and the academic dynamics within the university itself.

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