

## Exploring INQF-Based Curriculum in English Education Study Programs: Investigation of Curriculum Implementation

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Submitted: 17-03-2022

Revised: 28-04-2022

Accepted: 11-05-2022

**ABSTRACT.** This study is about implementing the higher education curriculum based on the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (INQF). It was done at Universitas Kristen Indonesia strictly in the English Language Education Study Program. This study aims to find out how the implementation of the higher education curriculum based on INQF is. The study method used was a qualitative study with a descriptive design. The data of the study were collected through interviews. The instrument of the study was the interview sheet. The informants of the study were the head of the Quality Assurance Agency of Universitas Kristen Indonesia, the head of the Faculty Quality Assurance Agency, and the lecturers of the English Language Education Study Program. The data taken through interviews were analyzed descriptively through transcribing the interview data, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. The result of the study is that the implementation of the learned curriculum is found to be through applicable, simple, and appropriate syllabus content, adding new information, and achieving goals and objectives, according to curriculum planning and quality standards. However, it requires improvement in certain parts of the curriculum implementation that some of the lecturers did not adjust the INQF-Based curriculum into the course they taught. Then it is concluded that although the INQF-Based curriculum has been structurally and well organized, it needs to be implemented by the whole lecturers in their learning and teaching. These findings suggest to the leadership of the University through the Quality Assurance Agency to control the implementation of the curriculum both at the Study Program level and at the lecturer level in carrying out the teaching and learning process.

**Keywords:** *Islamic education, modern Islamic boarding school, student management, discipline development*

 <https://dx.doi.org/10.32678/tarbawi.v8i01.5925>

**How to Cite** Naibaho, L & Silalahi, M. (2022). Exploring INQF-Based Curriculum in English Education Study Programs: Investigation of Curriculum Implementation. *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 8(01), 113-120. doi:10.32678/tarbawi.v8i01.5925.

### INTRODUCTION

The English Language Education (ELE) Study Program seeks the implementation of the education curriculum to produce prospective teachers who can adapt themselves according to the development of society. In addition, the ELE Study Program strives to apply management education knowledge and a core curriculum based on Christian education through vigorous activities and highly ethical and skilled teaching professionals. The Universitas Kristen Indonesia has recognized the curriculum implementation at the undergraduate level of education. The ELE Study Program's mission is clear: to focus on becoming an institution of higher learning that has an essential mechanism in producing quality graduates and scientists needed to develop the country. English education is integrated with knowledge skills to create students and a sustainable community capable of living in a multicultural society. At the same time, it fulfils its demands and

responsibilities to produce teaching staff in the field of English. Thus, this study examines the implementation of English language education learning in Universitas Kristen Indonesia. This study is critical because the performance of the higher education curriculum based on the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (INQF) has never been implemented, especially in the ELE Study Program, Universitas Kristen Indonesia.

To implement a curriculum successfully, educators must first understand and appreciate the curriculum's philosophy and goals, structure, and organization (Kaumba et al., 2020; Simbolon et al., 2021). In addition, educators should know the subject of their specialization and have teaching skills, including linking knowledge, skills, and values with each other. Educators, too, need to conduct teaching for students of various abilities and have positive and creative teaching characteristics to implement and succeed in the established curriculum (Bramwell et al., 2011). With this can be seen the role of educators in the successful curriculum implementation for all studies covering tasks levels, such as analyzing the curriculum objectives and its content. Educators also have a role in determining the implementation needs, such as equipping themselves with teaching skills and preparing lesson materials. Educators also need to plan and implement teaching according to the curriculum and make assessments to identify weaknesses (Pang, 2020). It aims to increase the effectiveness of curriculum implementation by making modifications to teaching planning.

The level of competency-based curriculum includes three primary groups: (a) curriculum development that contains annual programs and activities, semester breaks, monthly, weekly, and daily. In addition, there are also guidance and counselling programs or others; (b) the implementation of learning is a process of interaction between students and their environment so that there is a change in behaviour for the better; and (c) evaluation or assessment which is a process carried out at the end of the semester as well as a final formative or summative assessment, as an overall assessment to evaluate curriculum implementation (Echols et al., 2018; Sullivan & Downey, 2015). Curriculum learned is all the curriculum learned by students or learning experiences (Brown, 2008; Veza, 2021) and is something that students have learned in the lecture room. The curriculum learned also covers all the experiences and things that students experience in the lecture room. The curriculum learned is not only the essential type of curriculum among the various types of the curriculum but also a type of curriculum over students' less control. There are five steps of curriculum implementation, namely: (a) educational goals that include goals and objectives; (b) the formation of methods and language that include curriculum design, curriculum content, topics contained in each subject, lesson materials, and teaching and learning strategies; (c) implementation that includes interpretation of evaluation and modification results; (d) evaluation during the trial and implementation stages; and (e) is the feedback that includes interpretation of evaluation and modification results.

The presence of strategies and various teaching methods and activities can help student achievement (Akyol & Garrison, 2011). Educators who use multiple patterns of practice in teaching will encourage students from becoming bored and add more activity to the teaching and learning process. The implementation stage of student learning activities in the performance of the curriculum learned can also deliver the lesson's content systematically and effectively through resources and teaching aids (Margot & Kettler, 2019). Student learning experience means all student reactions or interactions with the background and living environment that occur through changes in student behaviour (Van, 2020). It requires students' active involvement, and students will learn through things they do and go through. Thus, these experiences enhance existing knowledge and provide a learning experience that challenges thinking and the ability to digest information and further develop self-reliance. In the context of the curriculum being learned, or known as the curriculum dealing with the learner's experiences, students are the main target of the planning and implementing of a curriculum. After experiencing the learning process planned in the curriculum, students' achievement is significant to educators and experts in education.

Perceptions of student achievement should change from what students know and can do because of their experience in the educational process (Mulder et al., 2014).

In turn, dispute whether the things taught by teachers are content contained in the written curriculum and can be learned by students. The items tested are limited to the portion of the items that the policy designer wants to convey. Students learn only a tiny part of the written curriculum. Accordingly, the curriculum has never been implemented as planned but has been adopted by users, especially educators (Marco et al., 2017; Gacs et al., 2020). It is because the teaching curriculum delivered by educators is influenced by an understanding of the philosophy of written curriculum guidance. Thus, despite having the most ambitious written curriculum, its achievement still depends on the efficiency of the educator while implementing it. Things that should be asked in this experience are what the student will or has done, not what the teacher has done. It is a step to plan a curriculum by organizing the learning experience in the form of subject units and programs (Kassing & Jay, 2020). This step is crucial because a clear organization will provide direction in implementing the learning process. Until it becomes a real learning experience and a reality for the students, it is also known as evolutionary processing, which is a step in obtaining information about achieving a set goal. Evolution can determine whether the curriculum used is in line with the goals that the school wants to succeed or not. Evaluation should assess whether there has been a change in student behaviour with the educational objectives that have been formulated. Also, evolution should use more than one assessment tool in a given time.

Curriculum and implementation of education are among the issues discussed at the inter-racial level debating educational matters. The problem faced is the implementation and content of the curriculum for the establishment of Christian academic institutions. The quality and standard of upper secondary students are deficient, and the lack of places for further study, so many of the students cannot continue their studies at a higher level (Ampofo et al., 2020). The problems that often arise in implementing the curriculum are learned, and student learning is related to motivation to be ready and interested in learning (Moust et al., 2021). This study attempts to examine the implementation of the curriculum implemented in the ELE Study Program at Universitas Kristen Indonesia. Hopefully, this study will be an essential guide and reference for other colleges. The curriculum implementation study aims to see the extent to which the implementation of the English language education curriculum can be understood and applied in the lecture room. Based on these objectives, the objective of this study is to identify the curriculum involved in ELE Study Program. Based on the stated purposes of the study, the researcher has identified the research question: "How is the implementation of the INQF -based higher education curriculum in the language education study program at the Universitas Kristen Indonesia?"

## **METHOD**

This study requires a thorough description and in-depth understanding to examine the actual situation of the implementation of Christian education learning. The aspects that are the main focus are the curriculum being studied. Thus, the qualitative method is very suitable to be applied for this study. The researcher made himself the primary instrument by going down to the field of study to conduct interviews with students. So, through qualitative methods, this study can collect as much data as possible. This method can supply more in-depth information compared to quantitative methods. Qualitative studies examine phenomena based on subjective or constructive epistemology. So, with this qualitative research method, researchers are confident that they can form a theory based on situations or phenomena from research data. The data of the study were collected through interviews. The instrument of the study was the interview sheet. The informants of the study were the head of the Quality Assurance Agency of Universitas Kristen Indonesia, the head of the Faculty Quality Assurance Agency, and the lecturers of the English Language

Education Study Program. The data taken through interviews were analyzed descriptively through transcribing the interview data, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The findings explain how students go through the curriculum implemented by the ELE Study Program. The results obtained from the research subject are that the curriculum studied is something that students have learned through experience. In addition, it is considered a curriculum that is less controllable by students, such as tests and assessments of student achievement conducted by teachers. In terms of theme, division refers to implementation through content, textbooks, reference materials, methods and activities, background experience, class preparation, revision, testing, and achievement.

**Content Execution:** The content follows the prescribed curriculum and syllabus. Most of the content is simple and appropriate and constantly adds new information to students. The curriculum studied for all study participants has met the goals and objectives as planned and followed the curriculum management plan. It is in line with curriculum quality standards. The primary references of students are textbooks and notebooks. Study participants found that the content and syllabus are beneficial and can be applied in life. They feel that what they learn is necessary and valuable. Thus, they feel happy and enjoy the learning experience. The five criteria for curriculum content are meaning, student interest, usefulness, validity, and can be learned (Nghi & London, 2010). The learning experience is something that students have learned in the lecture room that encompasses all the experiences and things that students experience (Naibaho, 2019).

**Implementation Through Textbooks and Materials:** The source of material that is the choice of student participants in the class and the lecturer's presentation is a textbook that is a reference and teaching aid. The student participants responded that they could easily understand and answer the lecturer's questions and share stories in the chapters studied. Findings show that student participants agree that textbooks and notebooks referenced in this course can help educational learning. Curriculum learned through textbook material allows students a lot in ensuring the achievement of objectives in the lecture room. Textbooks can help students learn all subjects (Khanova et al., 2015). All students in this study showed high alertness towards the importance and need for textbook material. If they do not understand the lesson, they will refer to friends first, then the lecturer based on the materials found in the textbook.

**Implementation Through Teaching Methods and Activities:** The discussion of the curriculum studied is also related to the lecturer and his teaching methods. It affects student learning. This study showed that student participants liked the attitude and style of the lecturers. Among their selected personalities or attitudes are having their style, assertiveness, cheerfulness, clear voice, and simple language. Interesting teaching methods and preparation of materials, simple techniques, varied and often changing with distinctive teaching methods attract students. All of this makes most students pay good attention. It also makes the atmosphere in the classroom a fun, active classroom with questions and answers and questions without being stressed or sleepy. The preferred attitude of the lecturer is friendly through laughter, exciting presentation, interaction, not irritable, likes to call students names, and moves to see student activities. Plus, if there is a discussion of current issues or things and the latest hot events and activities using materials and data. The most preferred classroom activities of the students were group work activities, discussions, and presentations in front of the class. They feel the involvement of students in these class activities is essential. They stated that they could remember more easily through discussion. They feel happy when they can answer and do something that can increase their efforts in achieving an objective. Student participants think that activities that involve students' interaction with what they have learned are beneficial because they have the

opportunity to practice what they have learned in class. These activities are valuable and suitable to help students become teachers in the future. The lecturer presented the lesson's content in detail and discussed it in style through class activities such as group activities to enable students to think (Bean & Melzer, 2021).

**Through Background Experience:** All student participants had the basics from kindergarten to high school. All students can also attend classes informally under the auspices of the ELE Study Program. All student participants had a foundation in the subject. They have a primary education starting from early education up to secondary level. Most of them graduated from private schools as well as government schools. That experience can help their studies at the university level to strengthen the information already learned before. The experience level of English proficiency is at a moderate level. Most of these schools use Indonesian as the medium of instruction. Students perceive that English language education is critical to them and as a subject that needs to be studied as a specialization. In-depth knowledge of the English language helps them implement English language practices in the routine of daily life and their society's various complex life systems.

**Through Preparation and Review:** In all educational subjects, it was found that students made preparations that became accustomed to them, especially when facing exams—preparing students before class helps them to understand the lesson easily. All student participants showed seriousness and interest every time they attended the course. The lecturers also liked to ask about their learning preparation in the class. Here shows that the lecturer gives importance to the initial practice of students. Each student participant had a means and time allocation to review their educational lessons. Usually, students make preparations before entering the classroom or at night. Each student participant allocated time from 4 hours to 6 hours per week, or 56 hours to 84 hours in a semester. It shows the seriousness of the student participants and their interest in seeking knowledge. It will help them to improve their academic performance further. The severity of the student participants and their interest in seeking knowledge through extracurricular activities can also help them improve their performance. Even some students take the initiative to serve to teach junior friends in schools and English courses as a method of reviewing lessons. Most students review their classes with more emphasis if faced with assigned tasks and responsibilities or homework or exams. The items tested are limited to a portion of the things to be conveyed in the lecturer's curriculum and teaching (Brandt et al., 2019). Students will be able to understand the curriculum due to preparation for the test thoroughly.

**Through Tests and Achievements:** Assessment is a crucial catalyst for the ELE Study Program that encourages students to revise and learn independently. Students believe that assessment can test mastery of knowledge. The students in this study thought that assessing skills, understanding, and application for this educational course was appropriate. In general, student participants can fully understand the lesson. Students who do not understand it are up to him to take the initiative independently. Student preparation before attending tests and examinations is an essential factor in students' understanding and achievement in learning. The students think that their academic achievement is more than deepening their knowledge after taking educational courses throughout their studies. Students consider assessment the primary catalyst that drives them to review lessons throughout the course. Students believe that assessment can test the mastery of knowledge in all types of assessments performed. Assessment methods begin in class again, including class attendance, question and answer sessions, and scoring (Preszler et al., 2007). In general, student participants understand the lessons learned in class and can apply and teach their knowledge. Student preparation before the test determines student achievement; they argue that academic achievement at a good level of achievement, seriousness, and interest of students to prepare and review before the test is crucial to understanding all areas of education.

## CONCLUSION

Learning materials, mainly textbooks, help students achieve learning objectives. The implementation of the learned curriculum is found to be through applicable, simple, and appropriate syllabus content, adding new information, and achieving goals and objectives, according to curriculum planning and quality standards. The curriculum studied is also related to the lecturers' teaching methods, attitudes, and styles. Findings of curriculum implementation through applicative, simple syllabus contents; the presence of new information; the existence of goals and objectives; and according to curriculum planning and quality standards, but improvements are needed for some lecturers who do not adjust to the INQF-based curriculum. Then it is concluded that although the INQF-Based curriculum has been structurally and well organized, it needs to be implemented by the whole lecturers in their learning and teaching. Thus, the findings suggest to the leadership of the University through the Quality Assurance Agency to control the implementation of the curriculum at the Study Program level and lecturers in carrying out the teaching and learning process.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would love to thank the Rector of Universitas Kristen Indonesia, which has given us the chance and funds to conduct the study and publish the study results. Our gratitude also goes to those people who contributed to completing this study.

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