



Bridging Policy and Practice: An Analysis of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) Curriculum Implementation Using David C. Korten's Fit Model

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum at a faculty in a state-owned university in East Java using David C. Korten's fit model, which emphasizes three elements: program, organization, and beneficiary alignment. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 12 lecturers, 6 students, and 3 administrative staff members, as well as through observations and documentation studies. The data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model. The results indicate that the implementation of OBE has achieved a progressive alignment between program design, organizational capacity, and beneficiaries, although it remains in a consolidation phase. The adoption of the Case Method and Project-Based Learning, supported by the SIM OBE information system, has successfully shifted the academic culture toward a student-centered learning approach, with average learning outcome achievements exceeding 70 percent of the class average score. The discussion of the findings suggests that while structural support and stakeholder involvement are relatively strong, several challenges remain, particularly regarding the consistency of pedagogical practices and the standardization of assessment among faculty members. These dynamics indicate that successful curriculum transformation requires a "triple alignment" among policy regulations, organizational culture, and classroom-level implementation. This study contributes to the conceptual framework of educational policy implementation by emphasizing that academic transformation is not merely administrative but requires strong synergy between curriculum design and operational capacity. The findings provide strategic insights for higher education institutions to optimize OBE implementation through the systematic integration of digital systems, faculty mentoring, and stakeholder collaboration to enhance graduate competitiveness.

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Introduction

Higher education plays a strategic role in improving the quality of human resources in Indonesia. The higher education system in Indonesia is organized by state universities (PTN) managed by the government and private universities (PTS) managed by the community or organizing bodies. The existence of PTN and PTS is an important instrument in encouraging the improvement of national human resource quality.

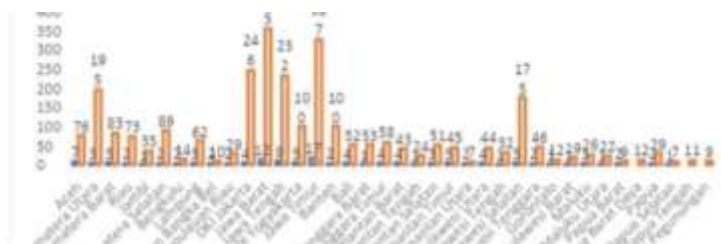


Figure 1. Number of Public and Private Universities in Indonesia in 2024 (Source: BPS (2025))

The latest data shows that in 2024 there will be 125 public universities in Indonesia, while private universities will reach 2,182 institutions (BPS, 2025). This number places Indonesia as the country with the third largest number of universities in the world (Dihni, 2022). Despite the number of higher education institutions is very large in terms of quantity, it does not fully reflect the quality of higher education in Indonesia. Based on the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2025. This shows that there's a gap between the quantity and quality of universities. Therefore, improving the quality of higher education is a must, as mandated in the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education Regulation Number 62 of 2016 concerning the Higher Education Quality Assurance System.

The quality of higher education institutions can be assessed through various indicators, such as national and international accreditation, quality of learning, research and publications, infrastructure, student achievements, graduate employment rates, partnerships, and user satisfaction (Myalkina, 2019). Accreditation is an important benchmark because it reflects the readiness of an institution to provide quality education.

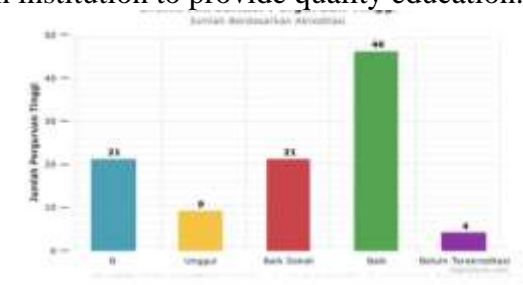


Figure 2. Higher Education Accreditation Chart
(Higher Education Accreditation at LLDIKTI V, 2025)

However, higher education accreditation data for 2025 shows that the majority of institutions are still in the “good” category, while the number that has received an “excellent” rating is relatively small (LLDIKTI V, 2025). This indicates the need for continuous efforts to improve institutional quality through accountability and collaboration among stakeholders (Staub, 2019). One indicator of the success of higher education is the quality of graduates. Quality graduates are expected to have academic and professional competencies, as well as life skills that are relevant to the needs of society and the world of work (As'adiyah, 2024). However, reality shows that the rate of educated unemployment in Indonesia is still high. Data from BPS (2025) shows that higher education graduates still contribute significantly to the open unemployment rate.



Figure 3. Open Unemployment by Higher Education Level (People) in 2024 (Source: BPS (2024))

This condition indicates a mismatch between graduate competencies and labor market needs. One of the contributing factors is an educational orientation that emphasizes student quantity over the quality of the learning process (Kurniawan et al., 2015). Changes in the global economic structure, technological developments, and job automation have further exacerbated these challenges. A World Economic Forum report cited by Gupta and Lanteigne (2020) states that 75 million jobs are potentially replaceable by automation, while 133 million new types of jobs are emerging with different competency requirements. Therefore, higher education must be adaptive to industry dynamics so that graduates have relevant and competitive skills (Ubihatun et al., 2024). One strategy to address these challenges is to adjust the curriculum based on industry needs. The curriculum must be designed systematically with reference to the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI) and the National Higher Education Standards (SN-Dikti) as stipulated in Permendikbud Number 3 of 2020 and Permendikbud Ristek Number 53 of 2023. Curriculum adaptation is a crucial step in producing graduates with specific competencies in line with industry trends (Arifin, 2021; Santika et al., 2022).

The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach is a relevant curriculum model (Muhammad & Novrizal, 2025). OBE is oriented towards measurable learning outcomes and focuses on the results that students must achieve (Purwaningsih, 2020; Shaheen, 2019). This model includes three main stages, namely Outcome-Based Curriculum (OBC), Outcome-Based Learning and Teaching (OBLT), and Outcome-Based Assessment and Evaluation (OB AE), which are integrated with the principle of Continuous Improvement (Muhammad & Novrizal, 2025). Conceptually, OBE is rooted in Spady's thinking, which emphasizes the importance of measuring learning outcomes as an indicator of educational success (Rao, 2020).

Outcome Based Education (OBE) is a curriculum approach that focuses on achieving clear, measurable, and relevant learning outcomes as the basis for planning, implementing, and evaluating learning (Muhammad & Novrizal, 2025). OBE is student-centered with an emphasis on mastering competencies through performance-based assessment (Susanto, 2023). This approach ensures that each study program designs learning outcomes that are in line with the needs of industry and society, so that learning does not only focus on knowledge transfer but also on the development of applicable skills (Halim et al., 2025). Conceptually, OBE curriculum design includes the formulation of learning outcomes, curriculum planning, selection of learning strategies, performance-based assessment, and continuous evaluation and improvement integrated with professional standards (Muhammad & Novrizal, 2025). The OBE framework also emphasizes a clear focus on outcomes, expanded learning opportunities, high expectations, and curriculum design that is aligned from the program level to the course level (Spady, 1994). The main components of OBE include the formulation of learning outcomes, the identification of knowledge and resources, the selection of appropriate learning methods, and the design of an assessment system that supports the achievement of outcomes (Noushad, 2024).



In higher education, OBE success indicators are reflected in the alignment between Program Study Educational Goals (TPP), Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL), and Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK) (Brawijaya University, 2024). This orientation is in line with the classification of learning outcomes that covers the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains as comprehensive indicators of competency achievement (Meilani et al., 2017). Thus, OBE not only emphasizes knowledge mastery but also the formation of attitudes and skills relevant to professional needs.

Various studies have shown the effectiveness of OBE in improving the quality of higher education. Agus et al. (2024) found that a character-based OBE curriculum is suitable for improving the quality of education. Susanto and Muzakir (2023) emphasized that the implementation of OBE in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 requires curriculum reconstruction, blended learning, and the strengthening of data, technology, and human literacy. Research Yang et al. (2023) showed a significant increase in the creativity of OBE-based training participants, while Mishra and Suvadarsini (2024) developed an OBE quality framework that is in line with international accreditation standards. Most previous studies have focused on model development, learning effectiveness, or OBE quality assurance system design. Research analyzing OBE implementation from a policy implementation theory perspective, particularly using Korten's (1984) fit model, is still relatively limited. Korten's model emphasizes the alignment between the implementing organization, the program being implemented, and the target group as key factors for successful implementation.

Based on this background, this study has the urgency to analyze the implementation of the OBE curriculum at stated own university using Korten's implementation theory perspective. Unlike previous studies that focused on the effectiveness of curriculum models or designs, this study focuses on the suitability between the implementing organization, program mechanisms, and target groups in the context of curriculum policy implementation. It is hoped that the results of this study can contribute theoretically to the development of educational policy implementation studies and provide practical recommendations for improving the quality of OBE implementation in order to produce competent graduates who are globally competitive. David C Korten's model based analysis is a highly complex suitability model that covers program, organizational, and user aspects. These three aspects are one way of looking at the alignment of curriculum implementation. Pedagogical evaluations are often less than optimal, focusing only on curriculum design and administration. In the field, it is often seen that failures in the implementation of OBE do not lie in the curriculum design but in the readiness of the institutional bureaucracy or the resistance of lecturers and student beneficiaries.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a research design, specifically a descriptive type. The aim is to investigate the dynamics of implementing the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum in improving student learning outcomes. Participants consisted of 12 lecturers who had taught for two semesters using the OBE curriculum in social humanities study programs, 6 students who had participated in 2 semesters of OBE learning, and 3 administrative staff who managed the OBE information system. Selection was carried out using purposive sampling techniques from the same university.

Data were collected using in-depth interviews developed based on David C Korten's theoretical framework consisting of Program, Organization, and Beneficiaries. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. The focus of this study was the dynamics of OBE



curriculum implementation in improving student learning outcomes. The implementation results were analyzed based on the alignment between the Program Study Educational Goals (TPP), Postgraduate Learning Outcomes (CPL), and Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK) as stipulated in Rector Regulation Number 36 of 2023. Data collection was conducted over a period of 3 months after obtaining ethical approval and written consent procedures. Data analysis used an interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which consists of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data validity, the researcher used.

Results and Discussion

Framing of Learning Outcomes

The reality on the ground shows that there's a gap in the Organization pillar, especially when it comes to infrastructure and digital literacy. This is reflected in lecturers' complaints about technical complexity:

"There are often obstacles in mastering technology and practical methods there's still confusion in the technical implementation."

This organizational unpreparedness has a direct impact on the workload of the Beneficiaries. Although Project-Based Learning (PJBL) improves competence, the lack of coordination across courses leads to an accumulation of tasks. One student said:

"Students have more and more tasks. But on the other hand, we feel more skilled and responsible because of the demands of project-based output."

This study confirms that the main challenge of OBE does not lie in its pedagogical substance, but rather in institutional management in mitigating the technical aspects of its implementation. The success of OBE greatly depends on the faculty's ability to bridge the gap between high achievement targets and real capacity in the field.

The implementation of the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum at the Faculty began simultaneously in 2023 with a paradigm shift from teaching-centered to learning-centered. The learning orientation is focused on the achievement of graduate learning outcomes (CPL) as the main indicator of academic success. The curriculum was developed hierarchically, starting from the faculty's vision and mission, which were then translated into graduate profiles, CPL, and Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK) integrated into the Semester Learning Plan (RPS). This process involved external stakeholders such as alumni and graduate employers to ensure relevance to industry needs. The learning methods emphasize the Case Method and Project-Based Learning (PBL) with a participatory assessment proportion of 50-60%, while midterm and final exams each range from 15-20%. Monitoring of CPL achievement is carried out through the OBE Information System (SIM OBE), which enables real-time tracking of achievements and generates student learning portfolios. In general, the average CPL achievement is reported to be above 70%. Although the curriculum structure is linear, there are still challenges in consistent implementation in the classroom, particularly regarding the explanation of the RPS at the beginning of the semester and variations in pedagogical approaches among lecturers.

Identifying Knowledge and Resources

The identification of knowledge and resources is carried out through collaboration between internal parties (lecturers, study program managers) and external parties (professional associations, alumni, graduate users). The aim is to ensure the alignment of graduate profiles with the needs of the job market without losing sight of the epistemological foundations of the discipline of administration. Core scientific subjects such as organizational theory, public policy, and public ethics are maintained as the foundation of the curriculum.



Relevance is strengthened through the integration of contemporary issues and benchmarking with other institutions. However, coordination issues between course lecturers still affect the consistency of RPS and literature updates. In terms of resources, The Faculty is supported by digital infrastructure such as SIM OBE, SIAM, and SIADO, which facilitate the integration of curriculum data and learning evaluation. The effectiveness of this system depends on the readiness of documents (especially RPS) as well as the competence and openness of lecturers to digital pedagogical updates.

Selecting Appropriate Modes of Transaction

The selection of learning methods is carried out strategically to ensure the achievement of CPMK. Lecturers tend to use a combination of lectures, discussions, the Case Method, and PBL. Project-based methods are prioritized because they carry up to 50% of the assessment weight and are considered effective in developing students' analytical and problem-solving skills. The formulation of CPMK is carried out through mapping the contribution of courses to CPL, the use of measurable operational verbs, and coordination of the curriculum development team. Monitoring of achievement is carried out through the OBE SIM, which allows for analysis of CPL achievement each semester. The institution also supports the improvement of lecturer competencies through OBE training, digital pedagogy, and regular updates to the RPS. However, challenges remain in lecturers' adaptation to changes in the learning paradigm and consistency in the use of assessment rubrics.

Designing Modes of Assessment

The assessment design in the OBE curriculum at faculty integrates learning objectives, teaching methods, and evaluation instruments. Assessment is conducted through a combination of formative and summative assessments with the following general standards: PBL ($\pm 50\%$), midterm exam (20%), final exam (20%), and assignments (10%). Assessment instruments include case studies, projects, presentations, portfolios, peer assessments, and self-reflections. Final grades not only serve as indicators of student achievement but also as tools for evaluating teaching methods. The integration of technology through the OBE SIM and e-learning enables transparent and systematic documentation and tracking of learning outcomes. However, the effectiveness of the system still requires coordination between lecturers, program administrators, and academic operators.

Synchronization Matrix: Expectations vs. Field Reality

The following is a comparison of the main points based on the interview results:

Table 1. Interview Result

Aspect	Standards/Expectations (Lecturers & Administrators)	Reality in the Field (Students)
Learning Methods	Dominance of Case Method & Project Based (>50%).	It has been implemented, but sometimes it feels like a "regular group assignment."
Linearity of Study Plan	Learning must be 100% in line with CPMK targets.	In general, it is consistent, but some lecturers still use the old teaching pattern (theory-based).
System Utilization	Monitoring through SIM OBE & Portfolio.	Assessment is system-based, but students' understanding of each topic can be uneven (focusing only on their group's part).
Graduate Output	Ready to work, creative, and proficient in practice.	Students feel more challenged and creative, but need more guidance after the presentation.



The implementation of the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum at the Faculty, shows a strong structural transformation, where the integration between the institution's vision and mission and the needs of the job market has been systematically incorporated into the Semester Learning Plan (RPS) document. Through the adoption of OBE SIM technology, the faculty is able to monitor the achievement of student competencies quantitatively with an average score above 70, which indicates the success of the transition from a conventional teaching model to outcome-based learning. However, there are gaps in pedagogical consistency, where students feel that there are variations in teaching styles between lecturers and limitations in their overall mastery of the material due to a fragmented focus on group projects. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen post-project reflection sessions and continuous synchronization between the curriculum development team and lecturers in the classroom.

Table 2. The Interaction Between Educational Policy, Organization, and Pedagogy

Key Interactions	Description of Relationships and Workflows	Strategic Role
Policy ↔ Organization	Policy provides legal mandates, regulations, and funding allocations. Conversely, organizations provide reports on effectiveness, governance management, and accountability.	Structural & Managerial
Organization ↔ Pedagogy	Organizations provide infrastructure, teacher training, and a culture of learning. Pedagogy provides feedback in the form of learning outcome data for internal curriculum evaluation.	Operational & Facilitation
Policy ↔ Pedagogy	Policy sets competency standards and learning outcomes (CP). Pedagogy translates these into teaching methods and assessments in the classroom.	Substantive & Implementation

Discussion

The results of the study show that conceptually, the OBE program has been designed in accordance with university regulations and industry needs. The preparation of the RPS based on CPL and CPMK, the application of active learning methods (FGD, project-based learning), and the use of measurable assessments are indicators that the program's suitability has been systematically pursued. According to Mahdiyah (2025), the FGD learning method is a learning method that forms groups consisting of more than one person, in which all participants and students are required to be able to work together in conveying the ideas and concepts needed in the discussion. Furthermore, the objective of the OBE curriculum is future-oriented, so it must be adapted to the needs of the world of work and also direct lecturers to imagine real conditions in the future so that students change their way of thinking (Susanto, 2023).

This is in line with what was stated by Novrizal et al. (2025) because the OB study program curriculum emphasizes the development and implementation of a curriculum that is oriented towards student learning outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation are carried out through program coordination and a digital academic system, which strengthens the implementation monitoring mechanism. However, the findings also indicate a lack of synchronization in the standardization of assessment instruments and variations in lecturers' understanding of learning outcomes. This shows that the alignment between program design and classroom practice is not yet optimal. In Korten's (1984) framework, this condition indicates that program requirements are not yet fully aligned with the capacity of implementers at the operational level. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the view that the success of education policy implementation is not only determined by curriculum design, but also by the consistency of implementation at the micro (classroom) level. Thus, OBE



implementation in the faculty is in a consolidation phase, where strengthening coordination and standardization of assessment is a strategic necessity.

The main challenge in implementing Outcome-Based Education (OBE) lies in aligning the perceptions and competencies of lecturers, which are influenced by factors such as seniority, adaptability, and technological literacy. These competencies are crucial because they correlate directly with graduate employability (Widayanto et al., 2021) and are key to success in Islamic higher education (Halim et al., 2025). Substantively, OBE requires mastery of technical skills, theoretical understanding, and critical thinking skills (Novrizal et al., 2025). Despite the challenges, strong structural and administrative support from the institution has minimized resistance, making it technically adaptive rather than ideological. From a policy perspective, this transition is an academic cultural transformation towards student-centered learning that modifies Korten's framework. The results of this study confirm that the success of OBE implementation is multidimensional, covering formal structures, academic culture, pedagogical capacity, and lecturers' technological literacy.

From the perspective of beneficiaries, the implementation of OBE has had a positive impact on improving student competence. Students feel that the project-based approach has increased their workload, but at the same time acknowledge that this method has improved their critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. This continuous curriculum alignment has become a crucial stimulus for institutions in producing graduates who not only have excellent hard skills but also the character and soft skills that meet the standards of the business and industrial world (Supriatnaningsih et al., 2021). The involvement of stakeholders, alumni, professional associations, and government agencies in the development and evaluation of CPL strengthens the relevance of the curriculum to industry needs. This demonstrates a fairly good fit for beneficiaries, where the curriculum is not only based on academic assumptions but also market signals. This is in line with the opinion of Anindya et al. (2024) regarding the importance of serious support from universities, both morally and materially. There are still challenges in student time management and lecturer consistency in explaining the urgency of CPMK. These findings indicate that the success of OBE does not only depend on the design of learning outcomes, but also on the quality of pedagogical communication in the classroom. Conceptually, the results of this study reinforce the theory of constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996), which emphasizes the importance of alignment between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment. When alignment is achieved, students show higher participation and engagement.

Based on these three dimensions, the implementation of OBE at faculty can be categorized as progressive but not yet fully convergent. In terms of programs and organizational support, the foundation has been well established. However, at the operational level, there are still gaps in capacity and consistency of implementation. These findings enrich Korten's model by showing that in the context of higher education, the success of curriculum policy implementation is determined by: (1) Standardization of CPL-CPMK-based assessment instruments; (2) Transformation of academic culture and improvement of lecturers' pedagogical literacy; (3) Active involvement of external stakeholders in the curriculum evaluation cycle; (4) Strengthening of learning communication at the classroom level. This study proposes the conceptual proposition that the implementation of OBE in higher education requires triple alignment: (1) Policy alignment (regulations and curriculum design), (2) Organizational alignment (academic capacity and culture), (3) Pedagogical alignment (learning practices and classroom assessment).

If these three alignments work synergistically, then the implementation of an outcomes-based curriculum will not only be administrative in nature, but transformative in improving the



quality of graduates. The implementation of the OBE curriculum at faculty has shown relative compatibility between the program, organization, and beneficiaries, although it is still in the adaptation stage. The success of the program is supported by strong institutional support and the involvement of external stakeholders, while the main challenge lies in the consistency of lecturers' understanding and pedagogical practices.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the dynamics of the implementation of the Outcome Based Education (OBE) curriculum at the stated owned university, show progressive alignment between the program, organization, and beneficiaries as outlined in Korten's implementation framework, although it is still in the consolidation phase. The transformation of learning through the integration of Project-Based Learning, FGD, and measurable RPS-based assessments has encouraged a shift in academic culture towards more interactive, focused, and outcome-oriented learning. Managerial support, digital systems (SIAM and GAPURA), and the involvement of external stakeholders strengthen the relevance of learning outcomes to industry needs. The novelty of these findings lies in the concept of triple alignment in the implementation of OBE in higher education, namely the alignment of curriculum policy, organizational readiness, and pedagogical practices in the classroom as prerequisites for effective implementation. However, it is necessary to strengthen assessment standardization, optimize CPMK communication, and implement a cross-generational lecturer mentoring scheme to ensure the sustainability of academic transformation. In practical terms, this implementation model can serve as a reference for the development of outcome-based curricula in other universities by emphasizing the systemic integration of design, organizational capacity, and student learning experiences.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended that faculty leaders initiate technical workshops to synchronize and standardize assessment tools in the RPS for each subject cluster to ensure greater consistency. In line with this, lecturers are expected to optimize CPMK communication with students at the beginning of the semester to clarify the competency goals to be achieved. In terms of human resource development, institutions can provide cross-generational peer-mentoring schemes to bridge the technological adaptation gap between young and senior lecturers. In addition, improved practicum facilities and more flexible scheduling management are needed to effectively support the PjBL method. Finally, formalizing strategic partnerships through regular forums with alumni and graduate employers is crucial to ensure that the curriculum remains responsive to the needs of industry and the public sector.

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