

From Learning Outcomes to Quality Assurance: Institutionalizing Outcome-Based Education in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education

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Abstract

This study examines how Outcome-Based Education (OBE) is developed and institutionalized to enhance academic quality in Indonesian Islamic higher education. The research focuses on translating learning outcomes into curriculum architecture, instructional practices, assessment methods, and quality assurance mechanisms. A mixed-methods design was employed, using a developmental case study approach within an Islamic Religious Education program. Data were gathered through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), curriculum document analysis, student surveys, tracer studies, stakeholder feedback, and implementation monitoring. Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis, while quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and integrated through data convergence. The findings reveal an initial gap between relatively positive graduate achievements and weak alignment of outcomes within the curriculum system. Curriculum reconstruction subsequently established clearer linkages among graduate profiles, the Body of Knowledge, Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), course structures, competency progression, and assessment methods. During the implementation phase, institutional readiness, authentic assessments, student learning products, digital portfolios, and external feedback served as evidence of achievement of outcomes and as a foundation for continuous quality improvement. This study expands the understanding of OBE from a mere curriculum-design approach to an institutional framework that links learning outcomes to quality assurance. The interpretation of findings is limited to the initial implementation phase and does not yet encompass longitudinal evidence across graduate cohorts. Future research should comprehensively explore the assessment-feedback-revision cycle and longitudinally measure both learning outcomes and graduates' professional performance.

Keywords: constructive alignment; islamic higher education; learning outcomes; outcome-based education; quality assurance

1. Introduction

The primary challenge in implementing Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in higher education is no longer merely the formulation of learning outcomes, but ensuring that these outcomes can be traced through curriculum design, instruction, assessment, and quality assurance mechanisms. This requirement arises as educational accountability shifts from document compliance to evidence

of the competencies students have actually achieved. Such a shift also necessitates that institutions use assessment results to evaluate and improve the curriculum. In Indonesia, OBE implementation continues to face challenges regarding faculty understanding, instructional practices, and institutional support (Alfa et al., 2026; Khoiriyati & Sufirmansyah, 2024; Mufanti et al., 2024). Other studies indicate that OBE is increasingly linked to program evaluation and the enhancement of the quality of higher education (Ilmudinulloh et al., 2024; Mahalingam, 2026; Pham & Nguyen, 2024; Tam, 2014). The quality of outcomes also depends on the capacity of assessments to generate evidence usable for evaluating learning (Abdillah et al., 2025; Baartman et al., 2007; Lodge & Bonsanquet, 2014). Consequently, the significance of OBE lies in how learning outcomes are institutionalized into mechanisms for quality assurance and improvement.

Research on OBE has expanded significantly. However, the interrelationships among the formulation of learning outcomes, curriculum reconstruction, implementation, assessment, and quality assurance, viewed as a unified process, remain underexplored. Some studies focus on stakeholder readiness and barriers to OBE implementation, while others emphasize assessment alignment or assurance of learning at the program level. Mufanti et al. (Mufanti et al., 2024) and Romlah et al. (2025) demonstrate that the implementation of OBE in Indonesia is influenced by faculty understanding and institutional readiness. Other studies also tend to highlight the necessity of constructive alignment when applying learning outcomes to existing assessment formats (Ali, 2018; Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Guerrero-Roldán & Noguera, 2018; Loughlin et al., 2021). Mantai and Calma (2026), Mahalingam et al. (Mahalingam, 2026), and Barthakur et al. (2024) broaden the scope to include assurance of learning through program-level assessment and the use of evidence for curriculum review. Although prior research has examined various dimensions of OBE, there remains a need for studies that illustrate how these elements connect, spanning from gap analysis to the establishment of continuous quality improvement mechanisms, within the context of Islamic higher education.

To address this gap, this study explains how Outcome-Based Education (OBE) is developed and institutionalized to enhance academic quality in Indonesian Islamic higher education. The focus is on bridging the disconnect among curriculum design, instructional practices, assessment, and quality assurance. Under this approach, OBE is understood as a sequential, interconnected process. The analysis begins by identifying curriculum gaps and the need to strengthen graduate learning outcomes. These findings serve as the basis for examining curriculum reconstruction by aligning graduate profiles, the body of knowledge, graduate learning outcomes, course structures, competency progression, and assessment. Subsequently, the study examines implementation in terms of institutional readiness, instructional practices, evidence of student

achievement, and initial quality improvement mechanisms. The overall analysis explains how learning outcomes are translated into quality assurance mechanisms.

This study argues that institutionalizing Outcome-Based Education (OBE) can enhance academic quality when learning outcomes consistently serve as the central axis guiding curriculum design, instruction, assessment, and program evaluation. A lack of alignment among these components makes it difficult to track achievements and deprives quality improvement efforts of a clear foundation. Conversely, strong alignment ensures that every academic decision is directed toward the same graduate competencies. Consequently, curricular gaps necessitate reconstructing outcomes and mapping courses. This reconstruction leads to a more focused progression of competencies and more relevant assessments. When this framework is implemented with faculty readiness, participatory learning, evidence of achievement, and external feedback, OBE functions as a quality assurance mechanism. Thus, quality enhancement is viewed as the result of consistent alignment and the use of learning-outcome evidence for continuous improvement.

2. Method

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the development of OBE, from the needs assessment stage through initial implementation to quality enhancement. Qualitative evidence, documentation, and quantitative data complement one another. Data were gathered from stakeholders, students, curriculum documents, and relevant institutional records. All data were subsequently integrated to explain how OBE was developed, aligned, implemented, and institutionalized within the bachelor's degree program's academic system.

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods design with a developmental case-study orientation to examine how the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum is developed, reconstructed, and institutionalized as a quality-enhancement mechanism in Islamic higher education. This design was selected because the curriculum development process involves stakeholders' experiences, considerations, and decisions that require a qualitative understanding (Aguas, 2020; Alexander & Hjortsø, 2019). Quantitative data are used to reinforce findings through curriculum mapping, student surveys, tracer studies, audits of instructional materials, and initial implementation indicators. The research is conducted within the Islamic Religious Education Program at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri. Data collection spans the period from January 2024 through the initial phase of curriculum implementation in the 2025/2026 academic year. The

research process encompasses curriculum analysis, development based on the ADDIE framework, stakeholder validation, implementation of instruction and assessment, and initial monitoring of outcome achievement and quality-assurance mechanisms.

2.2 Participant

The study participants comprised the head of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) bachelor's degree Program, quality assurance administrators, 12 full-time lecturers, 87 students from the sixth and eighth semesters, and external stakeholders involved in curriculum validation, such as curriculum experts, employers of graduates, and alumni. Participants were selected using purposive sampling because the study required informants with direct experience in planning, implementing, evaluating, or using curriculum outcomes (Kholifah et al., 2025; Munastiwi, 2019). This strategy enabled each group to provide information relevant to the stages of OBE development and institutionalization. Inclusion criteria included active involvement in curriculum management or implementation, active student status during the specified semesters, or experience as employers or alumni of the program. Lecturers participating in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were full-time faculty members involved in curriculum implementation, while students were selected from the sixth and eighth semesters because they had experienced most of the program's learning process. Data from tracer studies and employer evaluations were analyzed as supporting institutional data and were not included in the directly recruited participant sample.

2.3 Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), curriculum document reviews, student questionnaires, tracer study data, graduate user surveys, and curriculum implementation monitoring documents. Multiple instruments were used to examine the development of the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) system across the dimensions of design, implementation, learning outcomes, and quality assurance. This combination of sources also enabled triangulation among stakeholder perceptions, documentary evidence, and descriptive quantitative data. Interview and FGD protocols focused on curriculum gaps, alignment of learning outcomes, assessment methods, and stakeholder needs, while document review forms were used to examine the mapping of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to courses, curriculum progression, and the completeness of instructional materials. Student questionnaires covered four indicators of digital technology use, whereas institutional data were used to track graduate outcomes, faculty readiness, learning outputs, and partner feedback. Data quality was ensured through alignment of instruments with research questions and triangulation across sources.

2.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted in stages, following the sequence of needs analysis, curriculum development, validation, and monitoring of OBE implementation. This phased approach was selected to enable tracking curriculum changes from the initial state through their application in the learning process. The sequence also allowed data from each stage to reinforce findings in subsequent phases. In the initial stage, researchers reviewed curriculum documents and conducted focus group discussions (FGDs), interviews, and student surveys to identify gaps and development needs. The subsequent stage involved expert and stakeholder validation of the design, followed by audits of course outlines (RPS), monitoring of the learning process, documentation of student outcomes, and collection of partner feedback during the 2025/2026 academic year implementation. Before the interviews, FGDs, and surveys, participants were informed of the research objectives, data confidentiality, and their right to voluntary participation, and then provided consent to participate in the study.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using a combination of thematic analysis and descriptive statistics, consistent with the study's mixed-methods design. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on the processes of developing and institutionalizing OBE (Syed et al., 2022). Descriptive analysis also enabled the use of quantitative patterns as supporting evidence for qualitative findings emerging at each stage of curriculum development. Interview and focus group discussion (FGD) data were coded, categorized, and thematically analyzed to identify curriculum gaps, alignment processes, implementation, and quality enhancement mechanisms. Document and quantitative data were analyzed using content analysis, frequencies, percentages, distributions (such as PLOs–course mapping), competency progression, tracer studies, and implementation indicators. Data integration was achieved through a convergence strategy that compared and linked findings from interviews, FGDs, documents, surveys, and institutional data to construct an interpretation.

3. Findings

3.1 Curriculum Gaps and the Need to Strengthen Graduate Learning Outcomes

The need to develop an Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum stems from an imbalance between relatively positive graduate outcomes and internal curricular mechanisms that are not yet fully outcome-oriented. This gap is particularly evident in course alignment, instructional planning, assessment, and the integration of technology into the student learning experience. Conversely,

graduates demonstrate successful career transitions and receive favorable feedback from employers. These circumstances underscore the need for a curriculum that systematically and sustainably links learning outcomes, educational processes, and quality evaluation.

Table 1. Curriculum Gaps Identified across Interview, FGD, and Document Analysis

Curriculum area	Interview/ FGD Findings	Document Analysis Findings
Curriculum orientation	The previous curriculum was perceived as predominantly content-oriented, with limited attention to the contribution of individual courses to graduate competencies.	Curriculum documents showed limited explicit alignment between course content and program learning outcomes.
Course–outcome alignment	Faculty members reported limited understanding of how individual courses collectively contributed to graduate competencies.	Only 18 of 52 courses (35%) explicitly mapped their contribution to program learning outcomes, while 34 courses (65%) did not.
Course planning	Semester Learning Plans tended to be treated primarily as administrative requirements rather than instruments for ensuring progressive learning-outcome attainment.	RPS documents showed inconsistent articulation of the relationship among learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment.
Assessment practices	Assessment was perceived as being dominated by recall and conceptual understanding, with limited attention to application, analysis, and higher-order performance.	Existing assessment documents showed limited systematic linkage between assessment tasks and intended learning outcomes.

Source: The findings were derived from curriculum document analysis, a focus group discussion with 12 lecturers, and interviews with the Head of the bachelor's degree Program, the Program Secretary, and the Program Quality Assurance Unit.

Table 1 shows that the previous curriculum's weaknesses were not limited to a single aspect but were evident across several interconnected areas. The first issue was a curriculum orientation that placed heavy emphasis on content mastery. Furthermore, the contribution of individual courses to graduate learning

outcomes had not been consistently mapped. This pattern extended to instructional planning; course plans (RPS) were often treated merely as administrative documents rather than as tools to guide the incremental achievement of competencies. A similar pattern was evident in assessment practices, which predominantly measured recall and comprehension, while the skills of application, analysis, and the demonstration of complex performance received insufficient weight. These findings indicate that the alignment among learning outcomes, course planning, the instructional process, and assessment had not been systematically established within the existing curriculum structure.

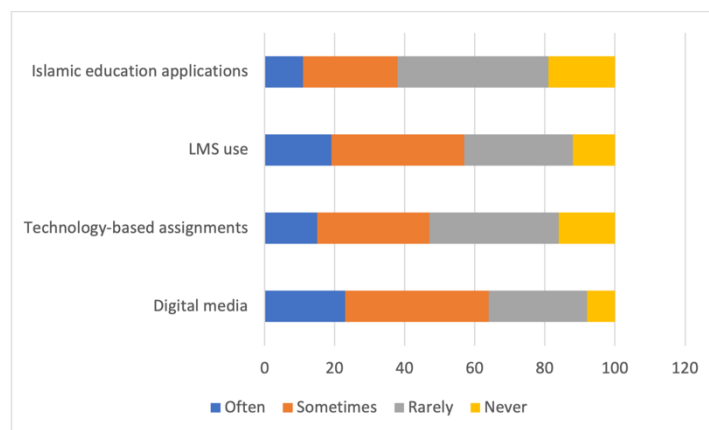


Figure 1. Students' Experiences of Digital Technology Integration in Curriculum Implementation

Source: Authors' analysis of student survey data, May 2025 (n = 87)

Figure 1 shows that the integration of digital technology into teaching and learning has not been uniform across academic activities. Students most often encounter lecturers' use of digital media, but the intensity of that use declines when technology is applied to more specific tasks; assignments involving videos, podcasts, or infographics have not yet become a routine part of the curriculum. A similar pattern is observed with Learning Management Systems (LMS): although some students use them in their studies, they are not consistently used as the primary platform for managing course materials, activities, and assessments. The most significant gap is the use of applications specifically designed to support Islamic Religious Education; most students report that such applications are rarely, if ever, used. These findings indicate that technology adoption remains fragmented and has not yet been fully integrated into students' learning experience.

Table 2. Selected Indicators of Graduate Outcomes

Graduate outcome domain	Indicator	Result
Employment transition	Graduates successfully traced	381 of 1,102 (34.6%)
	First employment obtained within < 6 months	357 of 381 (93.7%)
	First employment obtained within 6–18 months	24 of 381 (6.3%)
	Waiting time > 18 months	0
Initial income	High-income category	15%
	Middle-income category	55%
	Below regional minimum wage	30%
Employer evaluation	Graduates rated very good across assessed competencies	80–89%*

Source: Employment data were derived from the program's tracer study, which covered three graduate cohorts. Percentages were calculated based on 381 graduates successfully traced out of 1,102.

Table 2 indicates that graduates have achieved relatively positive external outcomes, particularly in the transition to employment and in employer assessments. The majority of graduates successfully secured their first job within six months of completing their studies, with only a small fraction requiring more time. This pattern suggests that graduates have favourable prospects for entering the workforce. Regarding initial earnings, outcomes vary: some groups earn high, moderate, or below-minimum-wage incomes. Employer assessments also reflect a positive trend; most graduate competencies were rated as “excellent,” although ratings varied across specific indicators. Overall, the data demonstrate relatively strong graduate outcomes, yet there remains room for improvement in certain areas related to the quality and sustainability of educational outcomes.

The data above suggest a trend in which graduates' relatively positive achievements are not yet fully supported by a structured, outcome-based curriculum. Internally, the curriculum still exhibits weaknesses in aligning learning outcomes, courses, instructional planning, and assessment. This pattern is also evident in students' learning experiences, particularly in the use of digital technology, which remains inconsistent and limited to specific activities. Conversely, at the external level, graduates transition into the workforce relatively quickly and receive favourable evaluations from employers. This trend reveals a gap between graduates' actual achievements and the curricular mechanisms intended to ensure that such outcomes are systematically designed, developed, measured, and evaluated. Consequently, the need for further OBE development centers on strengthening the linkage between the educational process and the mechanisms for assuring graduate quality.

3.2 Reconstructing the OBE Curriculum through Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Progression, and Assessment

The reconstruction of the OBE curriculum focuses on establishing clearer links among graduate profiles, learning outcomes, course structures, and the progression of student competencies. This process yields a more targeted mapping of graduate learning outcomes and a curriculum structure that advances incrementally from foundational to advanced levels. Curriculum refinement also incorporates input from experts and stakeholders to ensure academic and professional relevance. This reconstruction adopts constructive alignment as the foundation for developing the curriculum structure.

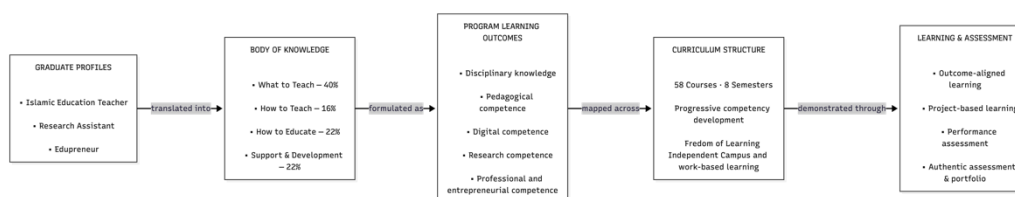


Figure 2. Translation of Graduate Profiles into the OBE Curriculum Architecture

Source: Authors' synthesis based on the redesigned OBE curriculum documents, 2026

Figure 2 illustrates how graduate profiles are progressively translated into an OBE curriculum architecture. Three graduate profiles, prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers, research assistants, and edupreneurs, serve as the starting point for identifying the areas of knowledge students must master. These profiles form the basis for a Body of Knowledge comprising four domains: what to teach, how to teach, how to educate, and support and development. This academic framework is then translated into nine graduate learning outcomes covering academic, pedagogical, digital, professional, research, and entrepreneurial competencies. These outcomes are mapped onto a curriculum structure comprising 58 courses across eight semesters. In the next stage, the course structure is aligned with learning activities and assessments relevant to the established outcomes. This process demonstrates that curriculum reconstruction proceeds systematically from defining graduate competencies to organizing knowledge, mapping learning outcomes, structuring courses, and arranging learning experiences and assessments.

Table 3 shows that nine graduate learning outcomes (PLOs) are mapped to the course structure with varying degrees of coverage. PLO-1 has the broadest scope, supported by 23 courses, particularly those related to Islamic studies, values, and the integration of the Indonesian context. PLO-3 has 11 associated courses, while PLO-6 has 7. PLO-2 and PLO-7 are each mapped to six courses, whereas PLO-5 and PLO-8 are mapped to five. Digital competence (PLO-4) is linked to four courses, and edupreneurial competence (PLO-9) to three. This

mapping demonstrates that each PLOs has a distinct developmental space within the curriculum, aligned with the nature and breadth of the targeted competencies.

Table 3. Alignment of Program Learning Outcomes with the Redesigned Curriculum Structure

Program Learning Outcome	Outcome Focus	Mapped Courses (n)	Representative Curriculum Components
PLO-1	Islamic disciplinary knowledge, values, and contextual integration	23	Islamic studies, Qur'an and Hadith studies, fiqh, theology, Islamic educational foundations
PLO-2	Pedagogical and teaching competence	6	PAI learning strategies, evaluation, instructional planning, microteaching, teaching practicum
PLO-3	Instructional and educational program design	11	Learning strategies, educational management, instructional development, field-based learning
PLO-4	Digital competence for Islamic education	4	Learning media and technology, digital content development, technology-supported learning

Source: Data were derived from the program learning outcome-course mapping matrix of the redesigned OBE curriculum. Courses may contribute to more than one program learning outcome.

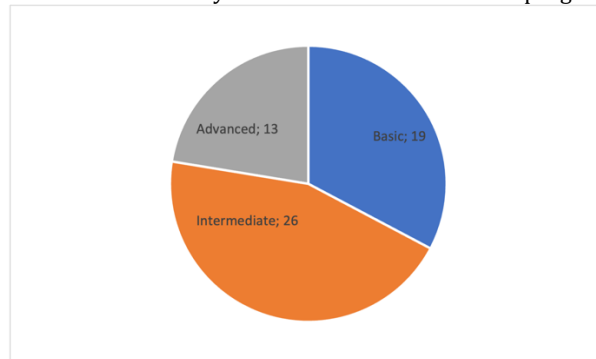


Figure 3. Competency Progression across the Redesigned OBE Curriculum

Source: Competency progression levels were derived from the mapping of 58 courses in the redesigned OBE curriculum. Basic, intermediate, and advanced levels represent the progressive development of foundational, applied, and professional competencies, respectively

Figure 3 shows that the OBE curriculum is organized into stages of competency development, progressing from the foundational level to the advanced level. A total of 19 courses (32.8%) are at the foundational level, establishing students' knowledge base and initial competencies. The largest proportion is at the intermediate level, comprising 26 courses (44.8%), which focuses on strengthening application skills, integrating knowledge, and developing field-specific competencies. Meanwhile, 13 courses (22.4%) are at the

advanced level, focusing on professional practice, field experience, research, and the completion of a final project. This distribution reveals a tiered pattern of competency development within the curriculum: students are guided to first establish a scientific foundation, then develop applied skills, and ultimately demonstrate competence through professional experience and advanced academic activities.

Table 4. Stakeholder Feedback and Evidence-Based Curriculum Revisions

Stakeholder group	Identified curriculum issue	Curriculum revision
Curriculum expert	Alignment among program learning outcomes, course-level outcomes, and assessment required strengthening. Several learning outcomes were distributed across too many courses, making their attainment difficult to assess systematically.	PLOs–course mapping was revised. Key and supporting courses were differentiated to enable more focused learning-outcome assessment.
Graduate employers	Graduates demonstrated strong disciplinary knowledge but required stronger classroom management and greater responsiveness to the characteristics of contemporary learners.	Gen Z-oriented pedagogical content was incorporated into learner-development courses, while classroom management was strengthened in professional field practice.
Alumni	Greater preparation was needed in educational administration, supervision, and contemporary curriculum management.	Curriculum-management content and clinical supervision were strengthened in relevant professional courses.
Students	Educational media courses were perceived as overly theoretical, with limited opportunities for producing digital learning content.	Project-based learning was increased and Digital Literacy and Islamic Education Content was incorporated into the curriculum.

Source: Data were synthesized from expert validation, employer consultation, alumni feedback, and student focus group discussions conducted during curriculum development.

The data above indicate a trend toward curriculum reconstruction that aligns with learning outcomes. Foundational learning outcomes are typically distributed across a broader range of courses, as they serve as the basis for subsequent competency development. More specific competencies are assigned to particular courses with a more focused scope. This structure establishes a clear progression: students move from mastering fundamentals to developing practical skills, eventually advancing to professional experiences, research, and final projects. Feedback from experts, employers, alumni, and students further demonstrates that this alignment is continuously adjusted to meet both academic requirements and the demands of professional practice. These findings point to the emergence of a curriculum that is better mapped, tiered, and responsive, with increasingly clear links among learning outcomes, course structures, competency development, and stakeholder needs.

3.3 Institutionalizing OBE through Implementation, Outcome Assessment, and Continuous Quality Improvement

The institutionalization of OBE becomes evident when curriculum design translates into faculty readiness, instructional practices, assessment methods, and evidence of learning outcomes. This process is supported by standardizing instructional materials, adopting more participatory teaching methods, and using assessments that generate evidence of student performance and work products. Implementation outcomes can also be tracked through portfolios, technological achievements, field experiences, and partner feedback. Collectively, these elements provide a foundation for strengthening evaluation and ensuring continuous quality improvement.

Table 5. Institutional Readiness for OBE Curriculum Implementation

Implementation indicator	Baseline condition	Initial implementation status
Faculty participation in OBE implementation workshop	–	95%
Courses with RPS containing explicit assessment rubrics	40%	100%*
OBE-based RPS with assessment instruments and rubrics	Limited coverage	100% of courses offered in Semester 1, 2025/2026*
Digital support for outcome-based evaluation	Not systematically integrated	Faculty training on the Smarttarbiyah OBE platform

Source: Data were derived from faculty workshop attendance records and the internal audit of Semester Learning Plans conducted before and at the initial implementation of the redesigned curriculum. *The 100% figure refers to courses offered in the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

Table 5 shows that institutional readiness is the foundation for implementing the OBE curriculum. A total of 95% of permanent faculty members

participated in an OBE implementation workshop focused on developing Course Plans (RPS) aligned with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), formulating Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and reinforcing a student-centered learning approach. The most notable change was in the completeness of assessment tools; prior to the training, only 40% of Course Plans clearly included assessment rubrics. A post-training internal audit found that all courses offered in the 2025/2026 odd semester had OBE-based Course Plans, assessment instruments, and assessment rubrics. This readiness was further strengthened by training on the “Smarttarbiyah” OBE platform to support learning evaluation based on constructive alignment. This pattern illustrates that OBE implementation began with strengthening faculty capacity, standardizing instructional materials, and providing support through digital evaluation systems.

Table 6. Alignment of Learning Activities, Assessment, and Student Outputs in Selected Courses

Course	Learning approach	Assessment method	Observable student output
Digital Literacy and Islamic Education Content	Project-Based Learning	Product assessment and peer review	Digital Islamic education videos and podcasts
Islamic Education Business Innovation	Case method and group discussion	Business-plan portfolio and pitching	Educational business proposal
Micro Teaching	Simulation and role play	Performance rubric and reflective video	Recorded teaching practice and reflective document
Educational Internship (MBKM)	Experiential learning	Performance report, logbook, and mentor assessment	School-management report and learning media
Machine Learning	Tool-based problem-based learning	Problem-solving test and data-analysis project	Student-performance prediction analysis

Source: Data were synthesized from course implementation records, assessment documents, student learning products, and field-based learning documentation during the initial implementation of the redesigned OBE curriculum.

Table 6 shows that implementing OBE clarifies the relationship among learning activities, assessment methods, and student outcomes. Courses with a practical focus use more participatory approaches, such as Project-Based Learning, the case method, simulations, experiential learning, and problem-based learning. Assessment methods align with the targeted learning outcomes; digital products, business portfolios, teaching performance, internship logbooks, and data analysis projects serve as evidence of learning achievement. This pattern indicates that assessment focuses on observable performance and tangible products. Student outcomes thus bridge the gap between the learning process and

the expected course-level outcomes. Consequently, the application of OBE is evident in classroom practice through a more direct link among learning methods, assessment techniques, and evidence of learning outcomes.

Table 7. Early Indicators of Learning Outcomes and External Feedback

Outcome domain	Indicator	Observed result
Digital content production	Student-produced Islamic education digital content	45 products
Digital portfolio development	Learning artifacts accumulated in student portfolios	>300 artifacts
Work-based learning	Partner-school satisfaction with student performance	4.2/5.0
Research engagement	Collaborative student-faculty manuscripts produced	5 manuscripts

Source: Indicators were derived from course monitoring records, digital portfolio documentation, course evaluation, partner-school feedback, and research-assistance records during the initial implementation period.

Table 7 presents several initial indicators reflecting both the achievement of learning outcomes and external responses to the implementation of the OBE curriculum. In the digital realm cluster, students produced 45 content items related to Islamic Religious Education and compiled over 300 artifacts in their learning portfolios. Further evidence comes from field-based learning, partner schools awarded a satisfaction score of 4.2 out of 5 for student performance in internship and field experience (PLP) programs. In the research cluster, student involvement in faculty projects resulted in five collaborative manuscripts. These data demonstrate that the results of the implementation are becoming evident in academic outputs, technological performance, professional experience, and feedback from external environments where student competencies are applied.

The findings above indicate that the institutionalization of OBE proceeds by strengthening faculty readiness, aligning instruction with assessment, and using evidence of learning outcomes to inform evaluation. Initial readiness is evident in the increased consistency of instructional materials and the use of more structured rubrics. During the implementation phase, learning activities tend to shift toward more participatory formats that yield observable products. Assessments subsequently align with targeted competencies through performance tasks, portfolios, projects, and field experiences. Evidence of learning outcomes also emerges in digital products, technological achievements, academic work, and student performance at partner schools. These trends demonstrate that OBE is beginning to function as a mechanism linking the learning process to evidence of outcome achievement. External feedback provides an initial basis for evaluation and quality improvement.

4. Discussion

OBE serves as a tool for quality enhancement when learning outcomes act as the central axis consistently linking curriculum design, the learning process, assessment, and program evaluation. Research findings indicate that the shift toward OBE cannot be achieved merely through document revision; it requires the alignment of curriculum structures, the strengthening of faculty capacity, and the provision of traceable evidence of learning achievement. This process also requires feedback mechanisms to ensure that assessment results are effectively used to improve the curriculum and the student learning experience. Consequently, OBE is positioned as a process of institutionalizing quality, progressing from the formulation of learning outcomes to continuous quality improvement.

This study demonstrates that the development of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in Islamic higher education proceeds through stages of curriculum analysis, design reconstruction, implementation, and quality enhancement. Development efforts focus on translating learning outcomes into the curriculum structure and into quality assurance mechanisms. This process is crucial because the effectiveness of OBE depends on alignment among academic design, instruction, assessment, and evaluation of results. The first set of findings reveals a gap between relatively positive graduate outcomes and internal curriculum mechanisms that are not yet fully outcome-based. The second set of findings illustrates curriculum reconstruction achieved by aligning graduate profiles, the Body of Knowledge, Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), course structures, competency progression, and stakeholder input. The third set of findings highlights the institutionalization of OBE through faculty readiness, authentic assessment, evidence of learning outcomes, and external feedback. Overall, these findings position OBE as an architectural framework that links learning outcomes with continuous quality enhancement.

The findings of this research reflect Islamic higher education's response to social demands for increasingly diverse graduate competencies. Changes in work requirements make mastering the material alone inadequate, as graduates must also apply knowledge, adapt, and demonstrate competence in real-world contexts. At the same time, digitalization expands the range of competencies that must be developed through learning experiences. Jorre de St Jorre (2018) and Oliver (2018) show that graduate outcomes become more meaningful when contextualized within the curriculum and linked to employability. Basilotta-Gómez-Pablos et al. (2022) found that lecturers' digital competence plays an important role in integrating technology in higher education. Tam (Tam, 2014) and Vogt (2022) emphasized the importance of aligning outcomes, learning activities, and assessments so that curriculum design is truly results-oriented.

Therefore, the need for OBE arises from social pressure to produce graduates who are relevant, adaptive, and whose competence can be accounted for.

The institutionalization of OBE can be understood as the process of establishing constructive alignment across all levels of the curriculum. Gaps in the initial curriculum reflected weak linkages among Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), courses, learning experiences, and assessments. This situation made it difficult to systematically track competency attainment, even though graduates' external achievements were relatively positive. From Biggs's (1996) perspective, the first finding reflects misalignment, as learning outcomes had not yet become the primary drivers of the learning process. The second finding illustrates the process of establishing alignment by mapping PLOs, tracking competency progression, and structuring courses. The third finding demonstrates that this alignment began to take effect at the level of practice through participatory learning, authentic assessment, portfolios, and external feedback. Thus, constructive alignment frames OBE as an institutional process that consistently links the design, implementation, and evaluation of learning outcomes.

OBE functions effectively when learning outcomes serve as the genuine foundation for designing, implementing, and evaluating the educational process. Clear alignment among program learning outcomes (PLOs), courses, learning activities, and assessments facilitates tracking graduate quality. This alignment also provides programs with a more concrete basis for identifying curricular areas requiring improvement. Research findings indicate that PLO mapping becomes more focused following curriculum reconstruction. Implementation subsequently yields performance-based assessments, portfolios, student products, and feedback from partners. However, OBE can lose its effectiveness if course syllabi, rubrics, and outcome mappings are treated merely as administrative formalities without influencing the student learning experience. Therefore, the sustainability of OBE depends on an academic culture that uses evidence of learning achievement as the basis for curriculum evaluation and improvement.

This study extends research on Outcome-Based Education (OBE) by showing that curriculum institutionalization unfolds as a sequence linking gap analysis, alignment reconstruction, instructional implementation, outcome assessment, and quality feedback. Previous OBE studies have largely focused on faculty readiness, the adoption of student-centered learning, or institutional-level implementation challenges. Other research has examined alignment between learning outcomes and assessments at the course level. A study found that although faculty attitudes toward OBE were generally positive, implementation practices remained constrained by content-based curricula, assessment policies, and infrastructure (Katawazai, 2021; Trisha et al., 2025). Another study demonstrated that applying learning outcomes requires transparent alignment with assessment formats (Hammond & Brown, 2021). Other studies positioned

assurance of learning within the context of program-level assessment and the use of evidence for curriculum review (Grahmayanuri et al., 2025; Jamieson et al., 2025; Sampson & Betters-Reed, 2008; van de Mortel et al., 2023). This study builds on these findings by illustrating the empirical relationship among OBE stages as a pathway toward quality assurance in Islamic higher education.

The department needs to adopt Outcome-Based Education (OBE) as an academic quality policy implemented through an annual cycle of achievement evaluation, follow-up actions, and curriculum improvement. This policy is essential to ensure that the mapping of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Course Learning Plans (RPS), rubrics, and portfolios does not remain merely a set of administrative documents. Furthermore, assessment results must be utilized to identify specific courses, instructional strategies, and competencies that require strengthening. Research findings indicate that faculty training and RPS audits significantly enhance implementation readiness. Aligning learning activities with assessments also yields more observable evidence of achievement through products, performance, portfolios, and field experiences. Feedback from partner schools and student monitoring results provide an external basis for evaluating the relevance of competencies and designing follow-up measures. Consequently, institutions need to establish a formal Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) mechanism that periodically links PLOs evaluation, faculty development, curriculum revision, and stakeholder feedback.

5. Conclusion

OBE provides a structured framework for quality enhancement by linking learning outcomes with curriculum design, learning processes, assessment, and program evaluation. This linkage ensures that every curriculum component works toward the same competencies, making quality easier to track through concrete evidence of achievement. Findings indicate relatively positive graduate outcomes, despite weaknesses in the curriculum's internal alignment. Subsequent restructuring clarified the relationships among graduate profiles, the Body of Knowledge, Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), course structures, and competency progression. During implementation, these connections are evident in OBE-based course syllabi, authentic assessments, portfolios, student work, and partner feedback. Thus, the essence of quality enhancement through OBE lies in the consistency of constructive alignment and the use of achievement evidence to inform continuous curriculum improvement.

This research contributes by broadening the understanding of OBE from a mere curriculum design approach to an institutional framework that links learning outcomes, instructional implementation, assessment, and quality assurance. This contribution is significant because OBE is often discussed solely at the level of formulating graduate learning outcomes or instructional strategies,

while the interconnections among stages within the institutional cycle are rarely demonstrated comprehensively. Research data revealed an initial gap between graduate outcomes and internal curricular mechanisms. Subsequent reconstruction demonstrated how graduate profiles are translated into a body of knowledge, graduate learning outcomes, course structures, and competency progression. Implementation yielded evidence of achievement through authentic assessments, portfolios, student work, and external feedback. Thus, this study offers an empirical framework for understanding OBE as a pathway linking curriculum design with continuous quality improvement in Islamic higher education.

This research is limited to the initial phase of OBE implementation and therefore cannot explain the long-term sustainability of its impact on graduate quality. This limitation means that PLOs achievements cannot be compared across longitudinal cohorts. In addition, the relationship between curriculum implementation and graduate performance in the world of work cannot be tested causally. Implementation data still rely on internal audits, learning products, portfolios, learning monitoring, and partner feedback. PLOs measurements also do not use uniform assessment instruments for all courses, so the level of outcome achievement cannot be compared comprehensively. The assessment-feedback-revision-reassessment cycle has not yet been fully observed. Future research needs to follow several cohorts, develop consistent PLO measurements, and explore the relationships among learning outcomes, curriculum improvements, and graduate professional outcomes in a more comprehensive manner.

Declaration of AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

During the preparation of this work, the authors used DeepL (V.24.4.3) and Grammarly for optimizing language and readability. The authors have reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the publication's content after using this tool/service.

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