

Case Study on The Feasibility of The English Study Program at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis and Industry Interest in Its Graduates.

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the feasibility of the English Diploma Program at Bengkalis State Polytechnic and the interest of the industry towards its graduates. The research idea stems from the phenomenon and issue of a significant decline in student enrollment over the past five years. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. The respondents for this research are students of the English Diploma Program, alumni, lecturers, leaders, and industry practitioners related to the research problem. Data analysis was carried out using content analysis, which involves examining the collaboration of all collected data, interpreting it, drawing conclusions, verifying the facts found, and narrating the results. This research shows that the English Program at Bengkalis State Polytechnic has adequate facilities, but improvements are needed in technology access and industry connections. Students are generally satisfied with the quality of teaching and the relevance of the curriculum, although more practical opportunities and stronger industry links are expected. Alumni find the graduates satisfactory, but there is a need to enhance soft skills, technological skills, and work experience. To face the challenges of modern industries, curriculum improvements, practical skills development, and industry collaboration are necessary. However, the interview results show that the majority of alumni agree that the English Diploma 3 Program should be discontinued to make way for the development of the Applied Bachelor's Degree (D4) Program.

Keywords : English Study Program, Feasibility, Graduates, industry

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a source of knowledge as it is an organization that provides various education in different fields of science such as science, technology, medicine, law, arts, and so on. Various types of higher education have currently developed, such as universities, academies, colleges, institutes of technology, and polytechnics, serving as centers for research and development of knowledge as well as places to develop specific skills and knowledge in various disciplines [1]. Higher education is an essential element for a country's development because it is closely related to the development of individual potential to become more competent in their fields, enabling them to make better contributions to the development of society and the country. They play an essential role in the development of individual potential, enabling graduates to make significant contributions to society and national progress [2]. Every higher education institution is expected to produce graduates who have critical thinking, analytical skills, and effective communication. With these skills, graduates are able to compete and enhance the productivity and welfare of a country's economy.

One type of higher education that is currently in high demand by prospective students is the Polytechnic. This institution offers more applied, vocational, and professional study programs. There are 39 state polytechnics in Indonesia, one of which is Bengkalis State Polytechnic. Located strategically near the Strait of Malacca, Malaysia, and Singapore, Bengkalis State Polytechnic has become one of the rapidly growing vocational higher education institutions, currently offering 22 study programs comprising the fields of engineering and social humanities. It envisions becoming a leading vocational higher education institution with national and international standards. One of the study programs supporting this vision is English Language Program. English Language Program plays an

essential role in developing high-quality human resources in various fields, especially in the increasingly globalized and competitive job market. Established in 2009, this program is part of applied English programs aimed at training students to become skilled associate experts in English, with an emphasis on its use as a communication tool in the workplace, particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and focusing on vocational education in the hospitality sector. English has become an international and global language of communication, widely used in various countries, including Indonesia. The Indonesian government encourages the expansion of English usage, particularly through education, with the goal of enhancing citizens' ability to use the language in order to improve their standard of living. This policy has significantly increased the use of English, even in countries where English is not a native or second language [3]. However, in recent years, there has been a phenomenon of declining student numbers in the English Language Program and a decreased interest from the industry in its graduates.

TABLE 1. Number of Students and Graduates of the English Study Program in the Last 5 Years

Year	New Students	Total of Alumni
2019	22	20
2020	16	16
2021	10	-
2022	6	-
2023	7	-

The data above shows a decline in the number of students in the English Language Program over the last five years, which is a serious concern as it could impact the quality of the program and the relevance of its graduates to the job market or industry needs. In addition, based on observations and interviews conducted by the researcher with alumni of the English Language Program, it has been identified that there is a decreasing interest from the industry in its graduates. The factors causing the decline in student enrollment in the English Language Program and the industry's interest in its graduates are complex issues that require in-depth analysis. Several factors that may contribute to this decline include changes in the work paradigm, the development of information and communication technology, and the mismatch between the educational curriculum and the needs of the industry. There were also several researches that had been conducted to analyze the feasibility of study program, the result shows that there were weaknesses include the lack of teaching aids or learning media and the absence of an evaluation process in the English learning program at UBD. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the use of teaching aids or learning media to ensure that the learning process can provide optimal understanding [4].

Based on the explanation and issues raised above, this research aims to assess the feasibility of the English Diploma Program at Bengkalis State Polytechnic, which has been established since 2009. Problems such as the decline in student numbers over the past five years necessitate further research to examine the factors causing the decrease, whether these factors relate to the implementation and services of the learning program provided to students, the curriculum offered, inadequate facilities, and so on. Additionally, the study of industry interest in its graduates is an important concern in order to take strategic steps to improve the quality of education in the English Language Program and the relevance of graduates to the demands of the workforce. The results of this research are expected to answer research questions, including understanding the actual condition of the English Diploma Program in terms of teaching quality, facilities, and curriculum that may affect the program's feasibility, determining the industry's perception of English Language Program graduates in terms of work readiness and graduate quality, and providing considerations as to whether the English Diploma Program is still feasible to continue and accept new students in the future.

METHODS

Research Methodology

This research is a descriptive qualitative study. Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. The purpose of this research is to examine more deeply the feasibility of the English Language Program at Bengkalis State Polytechnic by analyzing the factors causing the decline in student enrollment, which is the main issue, as well as the industry's interest in its graduates. It describes the type of

research, location, equipment, materials needed, and procedures conducted based on the theory tested in the research.

Research Location

The research location is the Business Communication Laboratory at Bengkalis State Polytechnic. The subjects or respondents of the study consist of students, alumni, lecturers, and industry representatives who are related to the research problem, with the sample taken randomly.

Research Instruments

The instruments or measurement tools to be used in this research are: (1) Observation instruments; (2) Questionnaire instruments; (3) Structured interview instruments; (4) Instruments for student, alumni, and industry practitioner perceptions. These four instruments will serve as guidelines for collecting, exploring, and summarizing data.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and the use of questionnaires. Observation will be conducted to observe all activities at the research location. Questionnaires will be used to determine the perceptions of students, alumni, lecturers, leaders, and industry practitioners regarding the feasibility of the English Language Program. In-depth interviews will be conducted to obtain direct information from the research respondents.

Data Analysis Techniques

Once all data, including interview transcripts, observation notes, images, photos, and subject diaries, have been collected and deemed complete, the researcher then begin data analysis. The data analysis technique involves presenting the facts found in the field, then describing them according to the research questions, drawing conclusions, and narrating the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

THE ACTUAL CONDITION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM

The research began with direct observation of the academic environment of the English Language Program at Bengkalis State Polytechnic. The focus of the observation included campus infrastructure, teaching methods, interaction between lecturers and students, and supporting facilities such as language labs, teaching materials, and access to practical training. The observation results indicated that the program has fairly adequate facilities, but there are some areas that need improvement, such as access to the latest technology and the alignment of field practice with industry demands.

The next step in the research was designing the research questionnaire. The questionnaire was first validated by the Department to measure its validity and ensure that the questions were suitable for use as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was distributed to all students in the English Diploma Program with the aim of collecting data related to their motivation for choosing the program, their assessment of the quality of teaching, the relevance of the curriculum to industry needs, and their views on career prospects after graduation. The questionnaire also gathered feedback on the challenges faced by students during their studies. There were 15 topics in the questionnaire, starting with the motivation for choosing the program, the quality of teaching by lecturers, facilities and services provided, and the key question of whether students still consider the English Diploma Program to be worth maintaining. Below is an explanation of the questionnaire results, with research subjects being English Diploma students from semesters 1-6.

Reasons for Choosing the Program: Out of a total of 29 respondents, the majority (31%) chose the English Diploma Program due to personal interest (9 respondents). In addition, the influence of family/teachers/friends was a reason for 5 respondents (17.2%), while 6 respondents (20.7%) were attracted by the support and scholarships offered. A small portion indicated that they chose this program because of a desire to study abroad (3 respondents), good career prospects (1 respondent), or limited competition (1 respondent). Two respondents felt they had no other choice, with 1 respondent influenced by friends and 1 choosing the program unintentionally.

Related to the quality of Teaching: A total of 55.2% (16 respondents) rated the quality of teaching in the English Language Program as "Very Good," while 34.5% (10 respondents) rated it as "Good." No respondents gave a negative rating to the quality of teaching. A total of 51.7% of respondents (15 people) rated the curriculum of this

study program as "Relevant" to the development of knowledge and industry needs. Nine respondents (31%) stated the curriculum was "Very Relevant," and only one respondent felt it was less relevant.

The response toward the practice class during the learning processes indicate that 51.7% of respondents (15 people) felt that the program provided adequate opportunities for practice, while 34.5% (10 people) rated the opportunities as "Very Adequate." Only two respondents felt that the opportunities for practice were insufficient. The learning environment in the English Language Program received various responses. Ten respondents (34.5%) felt that the environment was comfortable and enjoyable. Eight respondents (27.6%) appreciated the multicultural learning environment, and another eight (27.6%) rated the learning as interactive. However, two respondents felt that there were limitations in English language practice. Regarding to the satisfaction with facilities and academic support, there were 48.3% (14 respondents) were "Very Satisfied" with the facilities provided, such as classrooms, language labs, and the library. Another 37.9% (11 respondents) stated they were satisfied, while two respondents were "Less Satisfied." While most respondents (44.8%) rated the academic support from lecturers and staff as "Adequate," while 13.8% (12 people) rated it as "Very Adequate." No respondents felt that academic support was inadequate.

The response toward teaching methods of lecturers shows that 62.1% of respondents (18 people) rated the teaching methods of the lecturers as very interactive and participatory, while 31% (9 people) felt they were sufficiently interactive, although sometimes one-directional. No respondents considered the teaching methods to be non-interactive. The quality of services in the English Language Program as "Good," and 34.5% (10 people) rated it as "Very Good." Four respondents stated that there were some shortcomings in the services.

Moreover, the item about Career Development Opportunities and Impact of Job Market Trends show that 51.7% (15 respondents) felt that the program provided adequate opportunities for personal and career development, while 37.9% (11 people) felt that the opportunities were "Very Adequate." A total of 55.2% of respondents (16 people) believed that future job trends greatly influence prospective students' interest in the English Language Program. A total of 24.1% (7 people) stated that these trends had a significant influence. While for Career Prospect Assessment, a total of 58.6% (17 people) rated the career prospects of graduates from this program as "Bright," while 13.8% (4 people) stated they were "Very Bright." Only one respondent felt the career prospects were less bright.

Education costs were considered to influence student interest by 31% (9 respondents). A total of 20.7% of respondents stated that the cost had a strong influence, while 10.3% said it had no influence at all.

The final question in the questionnaire asked about the feasibility of the English Diploma Program. Thirty-five students were asked to answer the question regarding the feasibility of the English Language Program at Bengkalis State Polytechnic. The results of the questionnaire provided an overview of students' perceptions of the program's sustainability. The following is the distribution of responses:

Students who chose the "Very Feasible" ((28.6%) option generally felt that this study program offers many benefits and has high-quality teaching. They appreciated the interactive learning methods and felt that the English language skills they acquired were highly relevant to the demands of the job market. This program is also considered to provide a solid foundation for careers in various fields, such as translation, tourism, and business.

The majority of students chose "Feasible" ((42.9%) because they believed that the program has a strong foundation and remains relevant to the needs of the job market, especially in the local area. Although they acknowledged that some aspects, such as stronger industry ties and improvements in supporting technology, need enhancement, overall, they considered the program sufficient to be maintained.

Students who selected "Moderately Feasible" (20%) generally stated that the program has potential, but some areas need improvement. They felt that the curriculum and facilities should be adjusted to current industry trends. There were concerns that the skills taught do not always align with the evolving needs of companies, particularly regarding technology and hands-on field practice.

A small number of students felt that the program was less feasible (5.7%) to be maintained. They expressed concerns about the lack of structured internship opportunities and limited connections with industry, which they believed reduced the program's overall value. They also pointed out that some lecturers needed to be more involved in building networks with the business and tourism sectors.

One student who chose "Not Feasible" believed that the program did not meet their expectations. They felt that the career prospects promised were not strong enough, and some courses were considered too theoretical without clear practical applications in the industry. They also mentioned that a lack of innovation in the curriculum was one reason the program was deemed unworthy of continuation.

The results of the questionnaire showed that the majority of students (71.5%) considered the English Language Program to still be feasible, with most ratings falling into the "Feasible" and "Very Feasible" categories. However,

feedback was given for improvements in certain areas, particularly in strengthening the curriculum's relevance to industry needs and expanding opportunities for hands-on work experience.

Overall, the questionnaire indicated that the English Diploma Program was chosen by most students due to personal interest, with a high level of satisfaction regarding the quality of teaching, curriculum relevance, and career development opportunities. Suggestions from respondents for development included enhancing English practice, more intensive promotion, as well as expanding to a D4 program or creating a more specific program name.

INDUSTRY INTEREST IN GRADUATES

The results of this study indicate that graduates of the English Language Program at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis possess satisfactory quality in several aspects, although there is room for improvement in others. Below is a description of the survey results to assess industry interest in graduates, with alumni of the D3 English Program as the research subjects.

The first point in the questionnaire relates to Teaching Quality, where most respondents were satisfied with the quality of instruction, with 30.4% being "Very Satisfied" and 39.1% being "Quite Satisfied." No respondents felt "Less Satisfied" or "Not Satisfied," indicating that overall, the teaching in this program is well-received.

Next, Curriculum Relevance was rated as fairly aligned with industry needs, with 34.8% of respondents finding it "Relevant," and only one respondent considering the curriculum "Less Relevant." This reflects an adaptable curriculum that keeps pace with developments in the working world.

One of the related points asked in the questionnaire was about the Internship Program. The internship program was considered effective, with 43.5% of respondents rating it as "Quite Effective," and no one rated it as "Less Effective" or "Not Effective." This highlights the importance of internships in enhancing students' practical skills. Most respondents felt that the campus facilities support the learning process, although there is room for improvement, with 47.8% rating the facilities as "Fairly Supportive." Regarding ****Work Readiness****, while most respondents felt the program prepared them well for the job market, only 8.7% felt "Very Ready." This indicates a need to better equip graduates with deeper practical skills.

For Job Alignment nearly half of the graduates (47.8%) are working in fields unrelated to their educational background. Additionally, 47.8% of respondents also felt that English education played only a "Fairly Significant" role in their jobs. The Industry Demand for English graduates was considered to offer moderately bright job prospects, with 30.4% feeling the opportunities were "Moderately Bright," although 34.8% rated the opportunities as "Less Bright."

Regarding Graduate Skills, most respondents felt that graduates' skills were sufficient to meet industry needs, but there are still areas that need improvement, especially in soft skills, information technology, and internship experience.

The questionnaire results regarding industry interest in English Program graduates show that most respondents acknowledged the importance of English skills in the workplace, particularly in the digital era. Respondents noted that industries have a high demand for graduates who not only master English but also possess additional skills such as digital marketing, copywriting, and data analysis.

However, some respondents suggested the need for curriculum improvements to emphasize more practical skills, such as increased interaction with native speakers, more internship opportunities at relevant companies, and strengthened training in specific skills such as customer service, front office, and translation.

Some comments also highlighted the importance of adapting the program to global industry needs, particularly through strengthening collaborations with foreign universities, adding international certification programs, and offering soft skills training such as leadership and teamwork. Respondents also stressed the importance of up-to-date technology knowledge and digital skills to increase graduates' competitiveness in the job market.

Overall, while the English Language Program is rated fairly strong in providing a solid foundation in language skills, respondents expressed a desire for more practical fieldwork and a willingness to update the curriculum to better prepare graduates for the challenges of modern industries. This includes improving students' language skills, enhancing the curriculum with more practical work experience, expanding technological understanding, and building stronger industry partnerships.

ALUMNI RESPONSES TOWARD THE FEASIBILITY OF D3 ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM

Alumni Perceptions and Work Experience: Alumni who have entered the workforce generally assess that the D3 English Program provides a good foundational knowledge in English language skills. However, they express that the Diploma 3 (D3) level of education is often considered "inadequate" or suboptimal by a majority of the community and the job market. Alumni have received feedback from colleagues and supervisors indicating that a Diploma 3 does not offer sufficient competitive value compared to the Applied Bachelor's (D4) or Bachelor's (S1) levels.

Challenges in the Workforce: Many alumni find that D3 graduates are often viewed as academically immature and less professionally prepared. This results in their career opportunities frequently being limited to non-strategic positions or those with slow career advancement prospects. In the context of an increasingly demanding industry that seeks a workforce with higher education levels and stronger technical and managerial skills, D3 graduates appear unable to compete optimally with D4 or Bachelor's (S1) graduates.

Recommendations from Alumni: Alumni recommend that the D3 English Program should no longer accept new students in the coming years, especially if the Language Department plans to open an Applied Bachelor's (D4) Program. They argue that the sustainability of the D3 Program may not be effective in the long term, as society and industry value graduates from programs that offer more comprehensive skills and knowledge, such as at the D4 or S1 levels. By opening a D4 program, it is hoped that Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis can be more competitive and produce graduates who are more relevant to the current job market demands.

Need for Skills Enhancement and Industry Collaboration: Alumni also suggest that the D3 Program curriculum should focus on developing deeper practical skills, particularly in soft skills, technology, and fieldwork experience. They emphasize the importance of enhancing collaboration with industry to provide more structured and relevant internship opportunities. Increased hands-on experience is seen as a significant value-add for graduates, improving their capabilities to meet the challenges of modern industries.

This research finds that the English Program at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis has several strengths but also faces challenges that require attention. Based on observations, the facilities provided are adequate to support the learning process; however, there is a need to improve access to the latest technology and the connection between field practice and the industrial world.

The questionnaires distributed to students show that the majority choose this study program out of personal interest and feel satisfied with the quality of teaching and the relevance of the curriculum to industry needs. Nevertheless, there are several areas that need improvement, such as providing more practical opportunities and stronger connections with the job market.

On the other hand, survey results from alumni indicate that graduates of this program have a satisfactory quality in the eyes of the industry, but there is a need to enhance practical skills, especially soft skills and information technology skills. Although the internship program is considered effective, most graduates work in fields that are not entirely aligned with their educational background. Additionally, the industry has a high demand for graduates who not only excel in English but also possess additional skills such as digital marketing, copywriting, and data analysis.

Overall, the findings of this research underscore the importance of improving practical skills, strengthening cooperation with industry, and updating the curriculum to better align with modern industry needs. Digital skills and hands-on experience need to be enhanced to better prepare English Program graduates for global challenges. The majority of students assess that the English Program is still worth maintaining, with most evaluations falling into the "Adequate" and "Very Adequate" categories. By strengthening collaboration between academia and industry and providing a curriculum that is more relevant to job demands, it is hoped that Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis can produce more competitive graduates who meet future market needs. However, interview results show that the majority of alumni agree that the D3 English Program should be discontinued to allow for the development of an Applied Bachelor's (D4)

CONCLUSIONS

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