



Role of Academic Accreditation and its Requirements in Guiding Saudi Universities to Enhance Students' National Identity

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ABSTRACT

Purpose This study investigates the intricate relationship between academic accreditation, its requisites, and the transformative journey of national identity within Saudi universities. **Methodology** Employing a descriptive survey methodology, questionnaires were distributed to experts in curricula, education fundamentals, and faculty members from various Saudi universities. The collected data was analyzed utilizing statistical measures such as arithmetic averages on SPSS tools employing correlation analysis to measure the relationships between questionnaire items and the overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient was undertaken to evaluate the tool's stability.

Findings Meticulous analysis revealed a significant contribution of academic accreditation requirements in skillfully nurturing the national identity of Saudi universities' erudite student body. Notably, the items elucidating the National Qualifications Framework emerged as potent catalysts, emphasizing essential learning outcomes encompassing responsibility, teamwork skills, and citizenship values, all crucial for fostering national identity. **Implications for research and practice.** Findings unveil the pivotal role played by academic accreditation processes in guiding Saudi universities toward bolstering national identity. The study highlights the need for continued emphasis on accreditation requirements, integration with responsible citizenship values, and comprehensive program monitoring. The study however was limited to a small sample size and contextual specificity, which should be addressed in future studies by expanding the sample and considering diverse educational systems and cultural contexts.

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Introduction

Academic accreditation holds immense significance in guiding universities to meet the diverse needs of society and ensuring the holistic development of graduates' knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Education and the Education and Training Evaluation Commission (ETEC) have made notable efforts to enhance the educational process by introducing robust quality systems and academic accreditation standards, to be implemented by educational institutions at all levels (Aburizaizah, 2022; Almurayh et al., 2022). These standards align with the National Qualifications Framework, a national body which drew a comprehensive roadmap for attaining learning outcomes prescribed by the ETEC (2021). By encompassing knowledge, skills, and values, including the promotion of national identity, these standards aim to establish clear learning objectives (Kumar & Albashrawi, 2022).

Notably, courses with a religious dimension and Arabic language courses, integral to the essence of identity, contribute significantly to the cultivation of national identity (Darbal, 2014). Extensive research has highlighted the positive impact of learning within the national framework, which aligns with academic accreditation requirements, in fostering social skills, responsibility, and teamwork, thereby nurturing national identity (Al-Mutawa & Al-Othman, 2021). In an era of rapid global communication, the preservation of national identities has emerged as a paramount societal imperative, as emphasized by Hakim (2017). Safeguarding national identity is now considered an urgent national security concern, and the Kingdom's Vision 2030 underscores the profound value of its society, which embodies the rich Islamic and Arab civilizational heritage and cherished values (Kingdom's Vision 2030, 2017).

Recognizing the pivotal role of universities in fortifying national identity, particularly through the design of their curricula and courses, the ETEC implemented various procedures and requirements including launching Saudi Arabia Qualifications Framework (SAQF) to draw more indigenous aspects of learning domains to be fulfilled for attaining academic accreditation at both institutional and program levels. The Commission also devised a comprehensive set of requirements, forms, and indicators empowering universities to craft courses and learning outcomes that facilitate the attainment of broader goals in higher education within the Kingdom (ETEC, 2021).

Implementing useful linguistic practices is a requirement of academic accreditation, which is a fundamental component of higher education policies. The formulation and growth of national identity could be significantly influenced by these policies and their supporting practices. Ricento (2005) highlights the existence of a strong association between the two domains in his book, highlighting the complex relationship between language policy and national identity. The arrangement and interaction of language policy and national identity as a whole point to a strong and significant relationship, claims Ricento (2005). Drawing parallels, Ferdman (1990) posits that the nature and substance of literacy education bestowed upon individuals hold the potential to "shape" their cultural and national "identity".

The significance of academic accreditation is widely acknowledged due to its role in guaranteeing the caliber of graduates and harmonizing their educational achievements with the authentic necessities, ambitions, and establishments of the nation. Consequently,

this reinforces the confidence of the community in academic institutions and places them in a competitive stance, contingent upon the proficiency of their alumni. The quality and alignment of learning outcomes are key indicators of the strength and excellence of the higher education system. These outcomes serve as a precise tool for accountability within the quality assurance framework in higher education (Aburizaizah, 2022; Almurayh et al., 2022).

In the context of this study, national identity encompasses a set of shared characteristics and distinguishing features that differentiate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from other nations (Makhloufi, 2018). It encompasses elements that foster a sense of pride in the country and its citizens, as evidenced by the study's instrument and findings. This operational definition assesses the respondents' degree of alignment with the tool and its indicators of national identity. The second term used in this study is Academic Accreditation, which refers to the quality assurance processes by which educational institutions or programs undergo evaluation by a national or international accreditation body based on predefined standards (Onsman, 2010). The main objective of this study was to encompass the procedural definition of accreditation carried out by the ETEC in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including its affiliated National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation. These activities aim to assess the performance of Saudi higher education institutions and their academic programs, ensuring their outcomes meet the evolving societal and labor market needs. This definition is reflected in the study's instrument and findings.

Problem Statement

Prior studies have underscored the significance of nurturing national identity and integrating curriculum materials that instill values such as sovereignty, independence, respect for the rule of law, public order, integrity, and transparency (Al-Ayasra, 2019). These values are now explicitly highlighted as targeted learning outcomes within national frameworks, particularly emphasizing social skills, responsibility, and teamwork, all of which contribute to the cultivation of national identity (Al-Mutawa & Al-Othman, 2021). While researchers specializing in quality and academic accreditation acknowledge the importance of these processes in improving university programs and learning outcomes, a need exists for objective scientific investigations to comprehensively explore the various dimensions of this role. Hence, this study's focal issue revolves around probing the impact of academic accreditation and its requirements in guiding Saudi universities to enhance the national identity of their students.

This study aimed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Assess the extent to which academic accreditation requirements contribute to guiding Saudi universities in enhancing the national identity of their students.
2. Evaluate the extent to which academic accreditation processes contribute to guiding Saudi universities in enhancing the national identity of their students.
3. Provide practical recommendations to relevant authorities based on the study's findings, enabling them to enhance the performance of academic programs in a manner that promotes students' national identity.

To achieve these objectives, the study addressed the main question: "What is the role of academic accreditation and its requirements in guiding Saudi universities to enhance the

national identity of their students?" This overarching question leads to two specific sub-questions: (1) To what extent do academic accreditation *requirements* contribute to guiding Saudi universities in enhancing the national identity of their students? (2) To what extent do academic accreditation *processes* contribute to guiding Saudi universities in enhancing the national identity of their students?

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

- *National Identity*

National identity, as defined by [Almaany Lexicon \(2022\)](#), refers to the distinct features, characteristics, and originality associated with a specific country or nation. [Petric \(2020\)](#) provides a significant definition, describing national identity as the sense of belonging to a particular country or nation. It encompasses a collective consciousness of the nation as a cohesive entity, represented by unique traditions, culture, and language. National identity goes beyond legal nationality and is psychologically understood as an awareness of differences and a recognition of "us" versus "them." It emerges through shared elements in people's daily lives, such as national symbols, language, history, cultural artifacts, and a sense of national consciousness.

[Bashen \(2009\)](#) suggests that the decline and crises of cultural identity can arise when there is a lack of coherence between an individual's thoughts and their perception of how others view them. This discrepancy can result in a breakdown of communication between oneself and the prevailing values in society, leading to a decline in self-concept. Therefore, identity can be understood as a sense of belonging, whether to oneself, society, or the state. Psychologists like [Erikson \(1970, 1979\)](#), have explored the formation of identity and its various affiliations. [Masya et al. \(2020\)](#) point out that during adolescence, individuals strive to define the meaning of their existence, their life goals, and the plans they need to pursue to achieve those goals. [Erikson \(1979\)](#) explains that the formation of identity during adolescence serves as a crucial groundwork for adulthood, involving integrating an individual's motives, abilities, beliefs, and personal history in a coherent manner. This process includes making intentional choices and decisions about work, values, ideology, and taking responsibility for people and ideas. The achievements made in later stages of life depend on how these conflicts were resolved in previous years.

[Kelland \(2015\)](#) emphasizes that identity formation begins at birth and continues throughout one's life. It is during adolescence and young adulthood that integration and stability are established, representing a sense of identity. [Erikson \(1979\)](#) describes identity as being rooted not only in an individual's essence but also in the essence of their collective culture. Human identity is significantly influenced by the interaction between social and global interactions and how individuals perceive their fit within their world.

- *Academic Accreditation and National Identity*

The National Qualifications Framework places significant emphasis on achieving diverse learning outcomes encompassing cognitive, values, and social aspects throughout all stages of students' education. This focus reflects a commitment to fostering an identity that is free from various crises, ultimately fostering a sense of belonging for individuals to themselves and their community. [Makhloufi \(2018\)](#) defines national identity as a collection of shared features and characteristics that distinguish a particular homeland from others,

forming the core essence of its existence and unique personality. Similarly, Hassan (2012) defines it as a social bond that carries a distinct cultural character. Exploring the theoretical framework surrounding national identity, including psychological perspectives and the significance of cultural cohesion, can gain a deeper understanding of how national identity influences individuals and society as a whole. This foundation provides a context for examining the relationship between national identity and the process of academic accreditation in higher education.

- *Academic Accreditation Requirements*

In the English language, the term "Accreditation" is closely related to trust and acceptance. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2022), it refers to formal approval and recognition. In the field of education, academic accreditation is defined as an official declaration confirming that an institution or program has met the required standards and criteria set by relevant educational bodies (Ahmed, Ahmed, & Siddiek, 2013). It serves as a recognition of an institution's or program's ability to fulfill its mission and goals based on predetermined criteria established by specialized organizations (Al-Azmi, 2021).

The institutional accreditation requirements, as outlined in the document issued by the ETEC (2021), encompass the following:

1. Licensing and Approval.
2. Organizational guide, policies, and procedures.
3. Guides for trainees, training staff, and employees.
4. Programs Specifications
5. Key Performance Indicators
6. Electronic system for record-keeping and documentation of students' records.
7. Utilization of an electronic central system for data collection and analysis.
8. Self-study report.

In order to apply for program accreditation, the ETEC (2021) has identified the following eligibility requirements:

1. Program Approval
2. Alignment with the National Qualifications Framework.
3. Fulfillment of the institutional accreditation requirements.
4. Students and faculty members guides.
5. Quality assurance system.
6. Program and Course specifications
7. PLOs assessment
8. Graduates
9. Advisory Committee.
10. Key Performance Indicators
11. Self-study report for the program.

- *Previous studies*

The objective of Radwan's (2021) research was to examine the impact of academic accreditation on the acquisition of a competitive advantage within colleges of education in

Egypt. Utilizing a descriptive research methodology, the investigation implemented a meticulously organized framework consisting of four primary segments. The initial segment of the study thoroughly scrutinized the developmental endeavors carried out in the colleges of education in Egypt. The text provided comprehensive coverage of diverse aspects, encompassing the philosophy and objectives of the colleges, the key drivers that facilitated their development, and notable initiatives aimed at augmenting their overall quality, such as the College of Education Development Project. Each subsequent section provided an in-depth analysis of the topic of academic accreditation within institutions of higher education that offered programs in education. The text offered a comprehensive examination of the notion of accreditation, shedding light on the fundamental principles that drove the accreditation procedure in these educational institutions. Furthermore, the text elaborated on the objectives of accreditation in this particular framework and provided rationales for the indispensability of accrediting such establishments.

The investigation was further pursued in the subsequent section, wherein a critical analysis of the notion of competitive advantage in faculties of education was conducted. The text underscored the importance of possessing a competitive advantage, explicated the necessary conditions for its efficacy, and demarcated the unique attributes that comprised said advantage. Additionally, the aforementioned section expounded upon the strategies utilized to attain a competitive edge, encompassing variables such as heightened efficiency, elevated quality, enhanced creativity, and increased responsiveness to customer demands. The fourth section of the study elucidated the crucial significance of academic accreditation in achieving a competitive edge in faculties of education. The text thoroughly examined the necessary conditions for attaining a competitive edge and delineated the fundamental prerequisites for establishing an academic accreditation mechanism in educational institutions to attain said advantage. Additionally, this section discussed relevant elements pertaining to human resources that facilitate the achievement of a competitive edge.

Refaiah (2020) conducted a study with the objective of examining the function of academic accreditation in directing Saudi Arabian universities toward addressing the challenges and requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The research utilized a mixed-methods design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The study employed two distinct instruments for data collection, namely a questionnaire and an in-depth interview guide. The survey instrument comprised a total of 20 items that were allocated among four distinct dimensions. Following the implementation of rigorous validation and reliability measures, the assessment was distributed to a cohort of 170 faculty personnel who were employed within quality assurance and academic accreditation departments at publicly-funded universities situated in Riyadh during the 2019/2020 academic term. The feedback provided by the respondents revealed a substantial level of consensus across all four dimensions of the survey. Aside from the numerical data, the qualitative outcomes yielded significant perspectives in comprehending the results of the quantitative investigation. The authors shed light on the factors contributing to the disparity between theoretical concepts and practical implementation with regard to the function of academic accreditation standards, evidence, and indicators.

Diab, Nassef, and Al-Najjar (2020) conducted a study with the objective of examining the theoretical framework that underlies academic accreditation. The study aimed to comprehend the precise meaning, distinguishing features, and fundamental tenets of academic accreditation, alongside the theoretical structure regulating superior quality in

tertiary education. The study sought to investigate the extent to which academic accreditation facilitates the attainment of excellence in higher education institutions. The study utilized the descriptive research approach to achieve its objectives. The study's results suggest that academic accreditation has a noteworthy impact on improving the educational process in universities. Consequently, this results in the holistic advancement of the educational framework. The research underscored the significance of academic accreditation as a pivotal tool in achieving excellence at both the local and global levels.

[Hakim \(2017\)](#) study sought to present a framework for augmenting the national identity within the university curricula of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in accordance with the objectives of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. The study utilized a descriptive methodology to gather pertinent literature on the subject of national identity, its importance, and the preferred representation of national identity in academic programs, in alignment with the objectives of the Kingdom's 2030 vision. This research investigated the contribution of Saudi Arabian universities towards fostering a sense of national identity, with a specific emphasis on the influence of academic curricula on the formation of students' national identity. The study subsequently presented a proposed vision by means of a scenario that was specifically designed to augment national identity. The aforementioned situation comprised diverse components, encompassing the pedagogical underpinnings of the suggested notion and its principal pillars, which entailed five facets: objectives, curriculum, pedagogical practices, assessment, and instructors. Furthermore, the research delineated the recommended protocols for executing the proposed perspective, projected hindrances, and tactics for surmounting them.

[Al-Obeid \(2017\)](#) conducted a study with the objective of examining the function of academic accreditation in the establishment of comprehensive quality standards in institutions of higher education. This research investigated the concept of academic accreditation, including its criteria, characteristics, and objectives, while also providing insight into the concept of comprehensive quality in higher education. The research aimed to investigate various crucial inquiries, such as the degree to which academic accreditation organizations aid in improving the caliber and efficacy of tertiary education establishments and the significance of enforcing academic accreditation criteria in said institutions. In order to attain the aforementioned goals, the investigator employed a descriptive, analytical, and documentary methodology. The research produced a number of noteworthy results, including the identification of a positive correlation between accreditation and the cultivation of trust and assurance among higher education institutions, the state, and society. Furthermore, the research underscored that the assessment of academic excellence and organizational efficacy constitutes the fundamental aspect of the accreditation mechanism for tertiary educational establishments.

[Elliott and Goh \(2013\)](#) conducted a study with the aim of investigating the impact of organizational learning on officials and faculty members in business schools at Canadian universities, as perceived by them. The investigators utilized a qualitative approach and executed a case analysis, opting for a purposive sampling strategy from four business schools in Canada. Information was gathered from diverse sources. The study's results revealed that accreditation had a significant impact on promoting organizational learning in three of the business schools that were analyzed. The process of accreditation was discovered to have a positive impact on strategic alignment, leading to a reassessment of the institutions' objectives and prioritizing performance management. Furthermore,

academic accreditation has functioned as a stimulant for transformation, propelling enhancements in the curricula proffered by these educational institutions.

The aforementioned studies have utilized a descriptive methodology, as is apparent. This investigation is in accordance with prior scholarly inquiry by analyzing the function of academic accreditation and its importance in attaining diverse advantages. The study conducted by Radwan (2021) investigated the significance of academic accreditation in achieving a competitive edge within colleges of education in Egypt. Diab et al. (2020) and Al-Obeid (2017) have conducted research that centers on the function of academic accreditation in advancing excellence in university establishments and establishing all-encompassing quality benchmarks in higher education.

Hakim (2017) study is relevant to the aim and scope of the present study that aimed to examine the impact of academic accreditation and its associated criteria on the promotion of Saudi universities' students' national identity. Hakim (2017) conducted the study with the objective of proposing a vision for enhancing the content of university curricula in Saudi Arabia to strengthen the national identity, in accordance with the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030. The text expounded upon the concept, criteria, characteristics, and objectives of academic accreditation, while underscoring the importance of total quality in institutions of higher education. Despite variations in their methodologies, all of the studies shared a central emphasis on the function of academic accreditation in advancing national identity.

Moreover, the aforementioned studies have utilized much established instruments and metrics to attain their respective goals. The current investigation is consistent with all such prior research endeavors as it also employs survey as the primary means of gathering data and employs a descriptive analytical methodology. However, the existing literature exhibits a deficiency in terms of investigating the precise connection between academic accreditation and the advancement of national identity within higher education institutions. Except for briefly discussing the significance of national identity or the content of curricula, none of them has undertaken a direct examination of the influence exerted by academic accreditation on the shaping of students' national identity or its role in nurturing a sense of national identity within university settings. Consequently, a discernible gap arises in comprehending the specific impact of academic accreditation on the promotion of national identity within the context of higher education.

Methodology

- *Research design*

Given the study's objectives, research questions, and the nature of the research problem, a quantitative and descriptive research design was adopted which utilized the survey method for data collection. This approach involved collecting data and theoretical information from scientific sources and previous studies. To achieve the study's objectives, the researchers developed a questionnaire as a tool to collect field data. However, the study was limited to specifically investigating the role of academic accreditation and its requirements in guiding Saudi universities to enhance the national identity of their students. Its spatial scope was confined only to administering to Saudi universities situated in the Riyadh region, which accounted for approximately 30% of all Saudi universities. The study's tool was implemented during the second semester of the academic year 2021/2022.

- *Sampling and population*

The study targeted the population of experts in domains of curricula, educational principles, and academic accreditation, as well as faculty members from Saudi universities. The researchers employed a random sampling technique to select a sample of 400 individuals from the study community. For analysis purposes, 360 questionnaires were considered, as specified in Table 1.

Table 1

Sample distribution based on job type, gender, years of experience, and specialization

Variables		No	Percentage
Gender	Male	320	89%
	Female	40	11%
Years of Experience	Less than 10 Years	260	72%
	More than 10 Years	100	28%
Specialty	Humanities	40	11%
	Scientific	320	89%
		360	100%

- *Data collection instrument*

In this study, a specifically designed questionnaire was utilized by the researchers following an extensive review of pertinent prior studies and theoretical literature. The questionnaire comprised 27 items, thoughtfully distributed across two distinct dimensions. To validate the efficacy of the tool, the initial version of the questionnaire was presented to a group of subject matter experts, who were entrusted with evaluating the clarity of language employed and the relevance of the items. Drawing insights from their constructive feedback, the researchers adeptly removed three items and reformulated some others, resulting in a final version of the questionnaire consisting of 27 items.

- *Tool Stability:*

In order to assess the stability of the questionnaire and ensure its reliability, the researchers opted to utilize Cronbach's alpha equation as a means of calculating internal consistency. This metric serves as a valuable indicator of the extent to which the items within the questionnaire effectively capture and measure the intended constructs. To substantiate the questionnaire's stability, a pilot sample comprising 30 individuals who were distinct from the main study cohort was selected for the purpose of administering the questionnaire. By employing this approach, researchers aimed to glean valuable insights into the clarity, relevance, and overall comprehensibility of the questionnaire items. This diligent process facilitated the identification of potential ambiguities or difficulties that participants might encounter during the questionnaire completion phase. The outcome of this pilot study was exemplified by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.92, which indicated a commendably high level of internal consistency. Consequently, this finding served to affirm the tool's resilience and effectiveness in gathering data of high quality and reliability.

- *Data Analysis*

Following the data collection phase, the gathered information was meticulously coded and entered into the SPSS computer system for comprehensive analysis. The researchers executed various statistical treatments to address the research questions, employing correlation analysis to measure the relationships between questionnaire items and the overall score. Additionally, the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was undertaken to evaluate the tool's stability. Furthermore, means and standard deviations were calculated to effectively respond to the first and second research inquiries.

Results and Discussion

To investigate the role of academic accreditation and its requirements in guiding Saudi universities to enhance the national identity of their students, the study calculated the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the estimates provided by the study sample. These calculations were conducted for the items of the research tool, categorized into two dimensions: (i) The contribution of academic accreditation requirements in guiding universities to enhance national identity; (ii) The contribution of academic accreditation processes in guiding universities to promote national identity. The results of these calculations are presented in [Table 2](#), which displays the mean values and standard deviations for each dimension.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for the Two Dimensions of the Questionnaire

No	Dimensions	Average	SD	Mean	Agreement
1	The contribution of academic accreditation requirements in guiding universities to enhance national identity.	74.62	7.03	4.39	High
2	The contribution of academic accreditation processes in enhancing national identity.	43.31	5.53	4.33	High
Average				4.36	High

[Table 2](#) presents the averages of the two dimensions very high, which reflects a high degree of agreement among the study sample on each dimension, as the average of the first dimension was (4.39) and the average of the second dimension was (4.33), and both averages reflect the high degree of agreement of the sample. As for the general average of the two dimensions of the questionnaire, it was (4.36), which also reflects a high degree of approval of the study sample. Learning outcomes, the quality of graduates, their knowledge, and their attitudes towards their homelands and related issues, such as honest citizenship and shouldering social responsibilities that nourish this spirit, have been confirmed by previous studies ([Al-Obeid, 2017](#); [Diab et al., 2020](#)).

These research findings demonstrate the significant role of academic accreditation in improving the educational process within universities, leading to the overall development of the educational system. Academic accreditation serves as a crucial mechanism for attaining excellence both locally and internationally. These findings align with the study conducted by Al-Obeid (2017), which emphasizes the necessity of accreditation to ensure the quality of education and enhance the educational process. Furthermore, accreditation plays a vital role in fostering confidence among the state, society, and various stakeholders in academic programs, institutional-level requirements for universities, and other services and activities provided by the institution. While these are general dimensions covered in the questionnaire, the study employed appropriate statistical treatments to address specific and detailed research questions. The results of these treatments are outlined below.

To address the first research question: "What is the degree of contribution of academic accreditation requirements in directing Saudi universities to enhance the national identity of their students?", the research sample's estimates on the items related to the first dimension were analyzed. The arithmetic means and standard deviations of these estimates were calculated, and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for Items in the First Dimension

No	Questionnaire Items	Average	SD	Rank
1	The National Qualifications Framework focuses on developing individual identity and national identity by emphasizing the learning outcomes of responsibility.	4.77	0.42	High
2	The National Qualifications Framework promotes community belonging and strengthens national identity by emphasizing the learning outcomes of teamwork skills.	4.69	0.61	High
3	Academic accreditation requirements assist universities in developing courses and learning outcomes that incorporate citizenship values, such as positivity, flexibility, and a hardworking culture.	4.62	0.49	High
4	The National Qualifications Framework highlights professional and academic integrity and ethics as important values at the Sixth Level.	4.62	0.49	High
5	The National Qualifications Framework's emphasis on social skills contributes to learning outcomes that enhance students' national identity.	4.54	0.64	High

6	Performance indicators for learning outcomes facilitate continuous evaluation and development processes to achieve educational goals, including responsible citizenship.	4.54	0.64	High
7	Performance indicators for academic programs and courses ensure continuous evaluation and development, safeguarding students' educational rights and duties that enhance national identity.	4.54	0.64	High
8	The national framework ensures alignment between qualifications and their desired outcomes, enabling students to explore national trends, development requirements, and the labor market.	4.46	0.64	High
9	At Level 5, the National Qualifications Framework emphasizes professional ethics, positive interaction with others, coping with societal challenges, and commitment to responsible citizenship.	4.38	0.63	High
10	Regularly updating courses based on evaluation maintains consistency between learning outcomes and the evolving needs of the labor market, thereby enhancing national identity.	4.38	0.63	High
11	The framework's description of graduate characteristics facilitates students in acquiring the traits of national identity.	4.31	0.82	High
12	The establishment of a national framework for learning fields simplifies universities' selection of skills and values for graduates, including responsible citizenship.	4.31	0.82	High
13	Academic accreditation requirements for program descriptions and courses promote values of national identity, such as moderation, tolerance, perfection, discipline, justice, transparency, determination, and perseverance.	4.15	0.86	High
14	Compliance with the National Qualifications Framework in program accreditation ensures high-quality outcomes that reinforce national identity.	4.15	0.86	High
15	The National Qualifications Framework emphasizes positive behaviors, awareness of loyalty and belonging to the homeland and its leadership at the first level.	4.08	0.92	High
16	At the sixth level, the National Qualifications Framework highlights participation in finding constructive solutions to societal issues and a commitment to responsible citizenship.	4.08	0.73	High
17	The third-level values of the National Qualifications Framework emphasize commitment to society's values, laws, regulations, public decency, and responsible citizenship.	4.00	0.88	High

After analyzing [Table 3](#), it is apparent that the cumulative arithmetic mean of the items belonging to the initial dimension of the questionnaire is considerably elevated, amounting to 4.39. The findings suggest a robust agreement within the study population concerning the substance of this particular aspect. Upon analyzing the individual item outcomes, it is evident that the item which underscores the National Qualifications Framework's prioritization of learning outcomes pertaining to the assumption of responsibility, as it fosters personal identity formation and bolsters national identity, garnered the highest mean score (4.77).

The item highlights the National Qualifications Framework's emphasis on learning outcomes pertaining to teamwork skills, promoting a sense of societal belonging, and consequently augmenting national identity, with an average score of 4.69. The item that underscored the role of academic accreditation requirements in facilitating the development of university courses and learning outcomes, as well as in promoting values associated with citizenship and responsibility, garnered the third-highest mean score.

The mean value of attributes such as optimism, adaptability, and a diligent work ethic was 4.62. The elevated mean value is indicative of the robust conviction held by specialists and academic staff in Saudi Arabian universities with respect to the noteworthy impact of predetermined accreditation prerequisites, both in a general sense and particularly in relation to educational achievements. The emphasis on learning outcomes has gained prominence in academic accreditation procedures worldwide, owing to the prevalence of outcome-based education as a fundamental aspect of higher education benchmarks on a global scale. The elevated mean scores observed in this dimension may be ascribed to the cognizance among academic institutions and their staff pertaining to the comprehensive directives delineated by accreditation prerequisites. The guidelines outlined herein establish the trajectory of academic institutions, their curricula, and their emphasis on attaining the caliber of their graduates. The significance of citizenship is underscored, as it is deemed essential in bolstering the potency and steadfastness of national identity within the collegiate demographic.

Statistical analyses were performed to investigate the second research question pertaining to the influence of academic accreditation processes on the promotion of national identity among students in Saudi universities. The study tool's second dimension, which centered on the role of academic accreditation processes in fostering national identity, underwent calculations of means and standard deviations for its constituent items. [Table 4](#) displays the findings. The statistical analyses provided significant insights regarding the influence of academic accreditation procedures on the promotion of national identity. The results, as indicated in [Table 4](#), provide valuable information about the role of these processes in guiding Saudi universities.

[Table 4](#) exhibits that the overall arithmetic mean for the items within the second dimension of the questionnaire, which focuses on the contribution of academic accreditation processes in guiding Saudi universities to promote national identity, was high, with a score of 4.33. This indicates a strong consensus among the study sample regarding all the items in this dimension. Further examination of the item results reveals that the highest average score was obtained for the statement: "The periodic reports of the courses enhance the verification of the quality of students' learning outcomes," with an average of 4.69. This indicates a significant level of agreement among the study participants on this particular statement.

Table 4*Averages and Standard Deviations for items in the Second Dimension*

No	Questionnaire Items	Average	SD	Rank
1	Periodic reports improve the verification of student learning quality.	4.69	0.46	High
2	Program reports enhance the verification of outputs' quality, including graduates' national identity.	4.46	0.64	High
3	As general university requirements, Arabic language courses aim to strengthen students' national identity.	4.38	0.84	High
4	Models and indicators developed by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission aid universities in aligning courses and learning outcomes with students' national identity.	4.38	0.74	High
5	Continuous evaluation of learning outcomes helps universities instill citizenship values in students.	4.38	0.84	High
6	Accreditation indirectly contributes to graduates' pride in the Kingdom's educational system.	4.31	0.46	High
7	General university requirements courses with a religious component promote students' national identity.	4.23	0.80	High
8	Self-evaluation plays a vital role in ensuring graduates' alignment with country and labor market requirements.	4.23	0.58	High
9	Academic accreditation ensures program oversight for the promotion of responsible citizenship values.	4.15	0.66	High
10	General university requirements courses contribute to nurturing students' national character.	4.08	0.73	High
	Average	4.33		High

Another noteworthy item is the one stating: "The periodic reports of the programs enhance the processes of verifying the quality of the outputs, including the national identity of the graduates," which obtained an average score of 4.46, indicating a high level of approval from the study sample. The inclusion of evaluation as the third element in the quality cycle, following planning and implementation, clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of accreditation standards in Saudi universities. It signifies that the accreditation process goes beyond mere adherence to virtual applications of quality standards, emphasizing the importance of tangible evaluation practices. On the other hand, the item with the lowest average score in Table 4 was "Enhancing academic accreditation oversight of programs to ensure the achievement of responsible citizenship values," which received an average score of 4.15. However, even this relatively lower score still indicates a high level of approval from the study sample. Lastly, the item "General university requirements courses contribute to refining the national personality of students," ranked last with an average score of 4.08, reflecting a significant degree of agreement among the study participants on the items within this dimension. Reviewing the results of the second dimension of the questionnaire overall, it becomes apparent that the averages were consistently high, indicating a strong consensus and approval from the study sample regarding the statements presented.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study provides valuable insights into the complex relationship between academic accreditation, national identity, and Saudi higher education, emphasizing the influential role of accreditation requirements and advocating for their integration with responsible citizenship values. The findings presented herein underscore the efficacy of the academic accreditation framework in institutions of higher learning and their respective curricula. Effectiveness, within the scope of this context, pertains to the methodologies and protocols implemented by institutions of higher education and their scholarly divisions, which yield concrete educational achievements that correspond with the practical requirements of communities. One of the requirements is the strengthening of the national identity. The favorable results witnessed in this research can be ascribed to the cognizance and dedication of academic administrators in higher education institutions, who give precedence to the administration of quality endeavors and academic validation. Furthermore, the committed endeavors of academic staff in executing the institution's tactics to attain superior educational achievements are instrumental in producing these advantageous outcomes. The courses and programs accredited through a regulatory body serves not only to authenticate student learning outcomes but also to fortify the fabric of national identity among graduates.

The importance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding the role of accreditation requirements and processes in promoting national identity. The theoretical significance of the study can be summarized as: (i) informing university professors about the practical benefits of implementing quality standards and their requirements by highlighting their impact on enhancing students' national identity; and (ii) clarifying the importance of academic accreditation requirements in fostering values of citizenship and social responsibility, thereby enhancing national identity. In terms of practical significance, the study is expected to benefit the following stakeholders: (i) committees responsible for establishing and developing study programs in Saudi universities; (ii) researchers and academics interested in academic accreditation issues and their effects on the quality of educational program outcomes; and (iii) universities and educational institutions in general.

Based on the findings, the study recommends: (i) National accreditation bodies should enhance transparency by publishing data and information related to the continuous evaluation of learning outcomes concerning personal and social responsibility and national identity. This will enable relevant authorities to utilize the information to make informed decisions and adjust their plans accordingly; (ii) secondly, it is crucial for universities to establish mechanisms for continuous evaluation of the impact of their academic programs on achieving desired learning outcomes, including those related to national identity. This evaluation process should be robust and incorporate feedback from students, faculty, and relevant stakeholders to ensure continuous improvement; and (iii) academic researchers can conduct additional studies to explore how universities can leverage local and international accreditations to promote national identity effectively. Investigating best practices and innovative approaches in this regard can provide valuable insights for universities seeking to enhance their role in shaping and strengthening national identity.

Finally, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including the potential lack of representation in the sample size and the contextual specificity of the findings. Future research should address these limitations, expanding the sample and considering diverse educational systems and cultural contexts.

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