Recognition of prior learning: The CIPP model in Early Childhood Teacher Education program

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ABSTRACT

The early years of birth to age five are critical for children's cognitive and socio-emotional development. Supporting this development is a challenging for teachers, who must not only design learning experiences but also manage meaningful learning environments for children. Effective Early Childhood Education (PAUD) requires teachers with a bachelor's degree relevant with PAUD. However, many early childhood teachers do not have this qualification, which can hinder the implementation of meaningful learning. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program offers a solution by providing a pathway for teachers to achieve a relevant degree. This research aims to provide a comprehensive description of the achievement of the Recognition of Prior Learning Program in the S-1 PG PAUD Study Program at State University of Surabaya in terms of CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product). This study used a descriptive qualitative approach by collecting data through observation, documentation, and semi-structured interviews. This research focuses on the evaluation of the RPL program at the S-1 PG PAUD program at the State University of Surabaya using the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) model. The results showed that the RPL program contributed positively to improving the professionalism and competence of PAUD teachers, especially in Surabaya. The findings in this study provide important implications for universities as RPL program organizers and expansion of collaboration between program organizers and other local governments.

INTRODUCTION

The quality of early childhood education (PAUD) is receiving increasing attention in shaping the basis of child development. One important factor that influences the quality of PAUD services is teacher qualifications. In many developed countries such as Poland, Australia and Sweden, PAUD teachers are required to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in PAUD. Based on the results of the OECD international survey, the qualifications in some countries have a regulation that the academic qualification of PAUD teachers is at ESCED 6 or bachelor's degree equivalent (OECD, 2019). Whereas in developing countries, the qualification standards of each country vary widely and tend to be lower than a bachelor's degree.

Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, until 2023/2024 only 52.03% of PAUD teachers have academic qualifications of S1, while there are still 47.97% of PAUD teachers who have academic qualifications under S1 education (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2023). Meanwhile, according to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 137 of 2014 on National Standards for Early Childhood Education, PAUD teacher qualifications are Diploma four (D-IV) or Bachelor's degree (S1) in the field of PAUD. This phenomenon indicates a gap between expectations for the quality of PAUD services and the real conditions on the ground. The OECD report also

confirms that improving teacher qualifications contributes significantly to the quality of learning and child development, making efforts to strengthen PAUD teacher competencies an important agenda in global education development.

Teachers should actively create their lesson plans or lesson plans by studying the situation, evaluating the child's needs, and developing adequate approaches to fit the context required (Tzuo et al., 2014). This understanding in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) learning can be met by the fulfilment of teachers who have bachelor's level qualifications with the depth of knowledge, skills and understanding that can be provided from the academic qualifications obtained by teachers. High-quality early childhood education depends on well-educated and professional teachers. Continuous professional development for all teachers is essential to have the freedom and capacity to be more innovative and creative in meeting the needs of PAUD. Academic qualifications are important because they signify that a teacher's competencies are acquired through higher education enriched by good practical experience (Nutbrown, 2021). This qualification system requires attention in terms of government policy to make effective changes.

Indonesia has adopted the policy of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in this case, including part of the national education system, which is regulated in Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 41 Tahun 2021 Tentang Rekognisi Pembelajaran Lampau which is a recognition of a person's learning achievements obtained from formal, non-formal, informal education, and work experience as a basis for continuing formal education or to do equalization with specific qualifications. Abdillah (2020) states that the implementation and objectives of the RPL system in Indonesia are strongly influenced by several things, one of which is the influence of the social and economic environment. As long as a person's knowledge and skills can be validated by the principles of the qualifications framework, they will get value or appreciation for the knowledge and skills they have acquired, whether obtained through formal, non-formal or informal education obtained through workplace experience, professional or competency-based training, one's life experience or from the results of a business because they have talent. This rationale serves as a fundamental basis for adjustments, such as offering more flexible access and establishing exemption procedures for certain courses. The purpose of the RPL policy is to recognize learning achievements that have been obtained either through formal education or outside formal education; provide recognition for knowledge and skills that have been obtained through non-formal, informal education, work experience, or previous formal education; increase access and flexibility to pursue higher education that encourages lifelong education. The implementation of RPL in the education sector is based on the needs related to the number, distribution, relevance and quality of teachers. The government in Indonesia continues to strive to improve professional teachers. One way is to take a higher level of education by meeting the requirements of linearity qualifications with the educational base they already have. Teachers as learning agents must have a minimum academic qualification of D4/S1(Sakti, 2020). This is a challenge for the world of education in Indonesia, especially at the PAUD level. Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, until 2023/2024, only 52.03% of PAUD teachers have undergraduate academic qualifications, while there are still 47.97% of PAUD teachers who have academic qualifications under the bachelor's degree (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2023).

Teachers with S-1 PAUD education qualifications have more professional competence in learning aspects, including understanding early childhood development, mastery of learning methodologies, ability to determine learning materials, formulate learning objectives, and motivate children (Yuslam et al. 2017). Meanwhile, according to Srihartini et al. (2021), teachers who do not match the qualifications and competencies in the context of PAUD will impact child development or even misunderstandings in implementing learning. This incompatibility is

an obstacle and challenge for teachers who do not have an S1 PAUD education qualification, where this professional principle has not been fulfilled because it is not linear with early childhood education (Eliza et al., 2022). It means that the teacher's performance in managing the learning process has a learner-centered impact which is also a component of the PAUD accreditation assessment as stated in Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 246/O/2024 Tentang Instrumen Akreditasi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Pendidikan Menengah.

On the other hand, Nasution and Darmayanti (2011) state that although the length of service owned by the teacher has been long, this does not guarantee that the teacher's performance will be better if the teacher does not have much ability to master teaching techniques or methods in contrast to the study conducted by Andriana (2018) on PAUD teachers, who stated that teachers with more than 10 years of experience perform better than teachers with teaching experience under 10 years. According to this, having this practical experience will be an important factor in considering how this experience can be recognized and integrated into efforts to improve the quality of PAUD teachers regarding academic qualifications.

The State University of Surabaya (Unesa) has a strategic area with easy accessibility to eastern Indonesia, which makes full efforts to develop cooperation with city governments and local governments in eastern Indonesia. As one of the organizers of the Recognition of Prior Learning program for the S-1 PG PAUD, Unesa has been trying to organize this program since 2021 through several cooperation schemes with several government agencies, one of which is the Surabaya City Government to provide full scholarships to PAUD teachers who have not taken formal education qualifications that are linear with S-1 PG PAUD. Based on PAUD statistics, East Java Province has the largest number of PAUD education units in Indonesia, totaling 37,659 with 1,259,755 students. In contrast, Surabaya City, as the largest city in East Java Province, has the most significant number of PAUD institutions at 2,636, with a total of 107,060 PAUD level students and 1,243 PAUD level inclusion students and 10,164 PAUD teachers. Based on data from the Surabaya City Education Office, data on teachers who are not S-1 (Bachelor) at the PAUD level is 3,690.

Some important experiences in developing the RPL program for the State University of Surabaya need to improve the quality and number of enthusiasts through evaluation and follow-up in the RPL program at State University of Surabaya. Evaluator use many evaluation models to determine the achievement of an education and training program. One of the models that can be used is the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model. Improving the quality of the RPL program at the State University of Surabaya, especially in the PG PAUD undergraduate study program, can be carried out using the CIPP evaluation model. The CIPP evaluation model has been found in several studies to assess an educational program but has not been found in the Recognition of Prior Learning program.

The CIPP evaluation model was developed in the late 1960s by Daniel L. Stufflebeam to help improve and achieve accountability for school programs in the United States. The CIPP model illustrates that the most important purpose of evaluation is not to prove but to improve. Stufflebeam, in his book Education Evaluation and Decision Making, quoted by Daryanto, classifies the education system into four scopes: Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP). Context evaluation identifies and evaluates the needs that form the basis for the preparation of a program. Input evaluation identifies problems, benefits, and opportunities to assist in decision-making in setting goals and priorities and allows user groups to evaluate goals. Process evaluation is intended to help program staff and access plan implementation to interpret its benefits. Product evaluation identifies and assesses planned and unplanned long-term and short-term outcomes and benefits. This research is aimed to provide a comprehensive picture of the

achievement of the Past Learning Recognition Program in the S-1 PG PAUD Study Program at the State University of Surabaya in terms of CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. The main objective is to describe a situation using semi-structured interview data collection techniques obtained from informants: RPL program managers (informant A), teachers and assessors (informant B), and program participants (informant C). The subject of this study were selected by purposive sampling, considering direct involvement, level of knowledge, and in-depth understanding of the implementation of the RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD program at the State University of Surabaya. Informant criteria include their direct experience in planning and implementing the RPL program, understanding of policy implementation, and the provision of information relevant to the evaluation aspects of the CIPP model. Informant A represents the context aspect, informant B represents the input, process, and product aspects, and informant C represents the product aspect. The research focus in this study is on the Recognition of Prior Learning program implemented in the S-1 PG PAUD (Early Childhood Education Teacher Education) study program at Surabaya State University based on CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) aspects with ideal criteria and data collection techniques presented in table 1.

Table 1. Research Focus of CIPP Aspects

Aspects	Ideal Criteria	Research Focus	Data Collection Techniques
Context	Assesses program objectives and environmental factors	Background and relevance of the program	Observation, documentation, interview
		Legal basis of the program	Documentation, interview
Input	Examines strategies	Recruitment process of prospective participants or students	Documentation, interview
		Qualifications of teachers and assessors	Documentation, interview
		Facilities and infrastructure	Observation, documentation, interview
		Curriculum	
Process	Implementation process	Learning planning tools	Observation, documentation, interview
		Quality of learning	Observation, documentation, interview
Product	Goal achievement	The success of the program	Documentation, interview

The types of data used are primary and secondary data with data sources in this study are informants consisting of RPL program managers, teachers, and program participants, events obtained from observing the implementation of the RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program, and documents related to the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program. In testing the validity of data in this study, researchers used triangulation techniques, which are triangulation of methods and triangulation of data sources. In this study, the data collection process was carried out until it reached a saturation point, whereby it was indicated that the data collected had covered all aspects needed to answer the research questions so that no additional informants were needed. Data analysis technique is done with three steps, which are data condensation, data presentation and conclusion drawing or verification (Miles & Saldana 2014). Data condensation is the process of reducing and organizing raw data through open coding and identifying important codes. Data can be presented by grouping codes into specific categories, and presenting them as thematic

narratives. Concluding is interpreting data to find main themes and verifying findings using triangulation techniques.

The researcher is not directly involved in implementing the RPL program under study to ensure that there is no potential bias that can affect the study's results. Triangulation of data sources, triangulation of methods, and member checking were carried out to maintain the objectivity and validity of the findings in this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in the context of education provides an opportunity for each individual to take and continue formal education without having to repeat and has been adjusted to the competencies they have. This not only saves time but also increases the flexibility of the education system. State University of Surabaya has organized the RPL program as one of the entry access options in implementing formal education since 2021. As an RPL program organizer, Unesa has an important role in supporting the development of competitive human resources in the era of globalization. So, it is necessary to evaluate the implementation of the RPL program comprehensively which can be used to improve program quality. Through the CIPP model, the evaluation of the RPL program in the S1-PG PAUD study program is carried out by analyzing aspects of Context, Input, Process, and Product.

Context

Background and relevance of the RPL program. Based on the data condensation and analysis process, the issue of "qualification needs" emerged as one of the dominant themes that became the background and relevance of the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program at State University of Surabaya. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with the manager of the RPL program and the Head of the S-1 PG PAUD Study Program that the Recognition of Prior Learning program of PG PAUD study program organized by State University of Surabaya is based on the need to provide formal recognition of the competencies possessed by PAUD practitioners, in this case PAUD teachers based on their work experience or informal learning. Table 2 presents data on early childhood teachers in Surabaya.

Table 2. Early childhood teachers' data of Surabaya

Number of Institutions	Number of Teachers	Teachers who do not have a bachelor's degree
2.636	10.164	3.690

Based on data sourced from e-Office and the Profile of the Education Unit, Surabaya City still has 3,690 PAUD teachers who have not yet graduated. This is the basis that PAUD teachers must indeed receive affirmation policies, especially scholarships from the government because the salaries earned by PAUD teachers cannot be said to be sufficient with an average monthly income of Rp. 1,000,000 even less than this nominal. In addition, PAUD teachers will also never get a professional certificate as a PAUD teacher due to the non-linearity of their formal education background. Despite being linear, PAUD teachers also need to follow an advanced program, which is Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG) program from the government. The condition of teachers in Surabaya City is that they have long work experience or teaching experience which on average has been more than five years so that it can be said to be following the requirements to become participants or prospective students of the RPL program. This is

the basis for State University of Surabaya to collaborate with the Surabaya city government in meeting these needs.

Legal basis for the RPL program. As the organizer of the Recognition of Prior Learning program, the institution does not make its own guidelines, that the implementation of the RPL program is based on Undang-Undang No.12 Tahun 2012 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi where this legal basis regulates various aspects of higher education, one of which is lifelong learning. To develop human resources who are excellent in lifelong learning, it refers to Permendikbudristek No.53 Tahun 2023 tentang Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan Tinggi. In addition, it is necessary to recognize a person's learning achievements in continuing formal education and provide recognition of learning achievements which can then be equated with certain qualifications which in this case are for PAUD teachers which are regulated in Permendikbud No. 41 Tahun 2021 Tentang Rekognisi Pembelajaran Lampau that the RPL program so that in implementing the RPL program, technical implementation is needed which refers to the Kepdirjendiktiristek No.91/E/KPT/2024 Tentang Petunjuk Teknis RPL pada Perguruan Tinggi yang Menyelenggarakan Pendidikan Akademik. The implementation of the RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program is included in the implementation of Type A with certain requirements where this type is RPL to continue formal education. The readiness of State University of Surabaya in implementing the RPL program includes procedures for registration, assessment, and recognition of SKS acquisition, recognition schemes, the maximum limit of credits or credits that can be recognized, the length of study, financing, and quality assurance of RPL implementation.

Overall, the findings on the context component of the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program are based on the unfilled qualification needs of PAUD teachers. The implementation of this RPL refers to government regulations as guidelines in organizing RPL. This means that State University of Surabaya is ready to organize RPL in the S-1 PG PAUD study program.

Input

Recruitment process of prospective participants or students of the RPL program. Through the data condensation process, the main themes in the student recruitment process were found. "several stages" is a theme that often appears. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with RPL program managers that the first stage carried out by State University of Surabaya is to carry out socialization to prospective applicants regarding the introduction of the RPL program where the process of recruitment is carried out through several series, which is portfolio assessment, interviews and competency tests with the media used including the university website, social media and brochures given for the socialization of the RPL program. This recruitment process is carried out at the beginning of each semester. Prospective participants who will become students must prepare documentary evidence that can be recognized and uploaded on the website that has been provided and adjusted to the learning outcomes. This requires assistance to understand how this portfolio is in accordance with the learning outcomes. Unesa as an organizer does not immediately open registration but the first is to assist prospective participants. After everything is ready, registration is opened then the next stage will be carried out, which is the assessor's assessment with a duration of approximately two weeks until the graduation meeting is held. Candidates who are declared not to have passed will be given an appeal period with a duration of approximately five days so that it can be used as well as possible. After the appeal period is over, prospective participants or students receive an announcement of the selection results.

Qualifications of lecturers or teaching staff and assessors. Through the data condensation process, major themes were found in the qualifications of lecturers and assessors. "understanding the concept of RPL" is a theme that often appears. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with RPL program managers and lecturers teaching RPL programs that

that criteria for teaching lecturers include experience in the field of PAUD where all teaching lecturers in the S-1 PG PAUD study program have met these qualifications. In addition to teaching lecturers, to become an assessor requires the ability to understand the concept of RPL. State University of Surabaya has 3 assessors consisting of the head of the study program along with 2 other lecturers and assisted by the study program administration team. The selection of these assessors is determined based on the level of understanding of the curriculum structure of the S-1 PG PAUD study program which will socialize CPMK (course learning outcomes) to sub-CPMK (sub-course learning outcomes) to applicants so that they know the relevance of the documents they have with sub CPMK. To improve competence and maintain the quality of learning, periodic training, workshop activities, and lecturer performance evaluation are conducted. The training is carried out every year or as needed through cooperation with other institutions.

Training of assessors on the portfolios of prospective participants is also carried out in order to provide practical experience through assessment simulations so that assessors can carry out their duties professionally and competently. Assessors will be equipped with a deep conceptual understanding of the RPL program, improve technical skills in assessing portfolios, and ensure that the assessment process is carried out objectively, fairly, and in accordance with national and international standards. So that the implementation of RPL can be implemented effectively and credibly and have a positive impact on human resource development, especially for teachers in Indonesia. Another thing Unesa did was conduct interview training for assessors. This training provides an opportunity for assessors to explore further to prospective RPL participants by verifying, clarifying, and deepening the information that has been presented in the portfolio, so that assessment decisions can be taken more comprehensively and accurately.

The facilities and infrastructure used in organizing RPL in the S-1 PG PAUD study program are comfortable classrooms, libraries, laboratories, technological devices such as laptops and projectors, as well as printed and digital teaching materials. The condensation results show that these facilities and infrastructure are one of the important factors in supporting an effective and comfortable learning process, as reflected in the theme "supporting learning". In maintaining comfort, Unesa carries out maintenance which is carried out periodically every semester.

The curriculum used in the RPL program with the regular pathway is the same. The difference lies in the disaggregation of recognized and unrecognized courses, as reflected in the condensed results which show that in terms of curriculum, the theme of "recognition" emerges as the main theme formed from the data analysis. At State University of Surabaya in the S-1 PG PAUD study program, the maximum limit of credits that are recognized is 70% and the minimum credit limit is 40%, which is a total of 74 credits from a total of 177 credits on the regular path. Overall, the findings on the input aspect of the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program at State University of Surabaya have been well prepared, although RPL managers are faced with several challenges, such as optimal assistance to prospective students in preparing portfolios, increasing the competence of lecturers and assessors, maintaining facilities and infrastructure and the process of recognizing portfolios in accordance with predetermined learning outcomes.

Process

The lecture planning tools used in this RPL program are Semester Learning Plan (RPS), syllabus, and learning modules that can provide clear and structured guidance for lecturers and students. The RPS designed by the lecturer in charge of the course contains the learning outcomes of study program graduates, learning outcomes charged to the course, course learning outcomes (CPMK), Sub-course learning outcomes (Sub-CPMK), assessment indicators, assessment criteria, forms of assessment, forms of learning, learning methods, learning materials and assessment weights. Learning methods in both online and offline classes used by lecturers

include lectures, discussions, case studies, and practicums using learning media including presentation slides, videos, and printed teaching materials. This is in accordance with the data condensation and analysis process that "learning outcomes" is the main theme where lecture planning tools pay attention to the learning outcomes set by the study program.

The quality of learning in the RPL program is in accordance with the implementation of curriculum quality assurance where Unesa in preparing the curriculum both regular and RPL is always from the results of tracer studies and in accordance with the needs of stakeholder input which is then tested starting from its readability whether it is true that the course is still needed or can still be used. Based on the data condensation process, "stakeholder input" emerged as a strong theme which means that stakeholders are the most important thing in ensuring the quality of learning. The interview results show that stakeholders involved in ensuring the quality of the curriculum that is derived from the learning process consist of PAUD principals as well as graduates who have become lecturers. The introduction to learning in the RPL program is different from the regular pathway where the communication applied is also different from regular students. However, this is not an obstacle for lecturers because the RPL scheme is not much different from the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program organized by Unesa where they already have a lot of experience in the field and a different age range so that the treatment of RPL students in the learning process is certainly different from the learning process for regular students. The findings on this process aspect indicate that the implementation of the RPL program by the S-1 PG PAUD study program at State University of Surabaya has been adjusted to the learning outcomes determined by the study program by paying attention to the quality of learning in the implementation of the RPL program of the S-1 PG PAUD study program.

Product

The success of the RPL program cannot be separated from indicators that include graduation rates, participant satisfaction and the relevance of competencies obtained to the needs in the field. Based on the data condensation and analysis process, "indicators of success" emerged as the dominant theme in the success of the RPL program. This indicator is important because it provides an objective measure of the effectiveness of the program in achieving learning objectives. The success of the RPL program can be known after the end-of-semester evaluation by the evaluation team involving the university's academic quality assurance team, lecturers, program administrators and sometimes external parties as stakeholders and can be known through reports from participants or feedback from RPL participants. The RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program is considered successful if the majority of students complete their studies on time, the competence of graduates is recognized by related institutions and an increase in the career path of participants after completing the RPL program. This RPL program is declared less successful if there is a high dropout rate or lack of suitability between learning and needs in the field.

Based on the results of interviews with RPL program managers and strengthened by the statements of RPL participants, it can be concluded that the findings on this product aspect show that the RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program has been successful as seen from the majority of students who have completed their studies on time, the competence of graduates is recognized by related institutions and there is an increase in the career path of participants after completing the RPL program.

Discussion

Context

Surabaya State University has attempted to organize the RPL program to meet the needs of PAUD teachers in Surabaya City. Through the cooperation scheme between Unesa and the Surabaya city government has helped PAUD teachers can reach higher education, namely undergraduate and education that is linear with PAUD without spending the cost of formal education. The results of research conducted by Rifenti et al. (2016) shows that providing scholarship assistance in the form of financing for teachers to continue their studies until they get a linear degree is very helpful in improving the quality of teaching and learning activities. This is in line with research conducted by Yusutria (2019) who stated that in improving professional PAUD teachers, scholarship assistance is needed for teachers to continue their studies in accordance with science. Teachers have a considerable share in improving the quality of education itself by directly interacting and meeting face-to-face with students. The linearity factor of the field of study is the main thing in teacher professionalism because with relevant competencies in their fields it will have a positive effect on mastery of learning materials which also includes understanding the characteristics of the discipline concerned (Fadli et al., 2023; Maghfur et al., 2022).

Policies regarding RPL held at the Unesa PG PAUD Study Program are in line with national strategies where the competence of PAUD teachers affects the quality of early childhood education. The national strategy in the field of education, especially PAUD where the Directorate of PAUD has a priority program, one of which is PAUD Holistik Integratif (HI). The organization of educational services in implementing PAUD Holistik Integratif services in PAUD units is in collaboration with local or city agencies and related partners. In organizing HI education services to develop the various potentials of children that include religious and moral values, physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art, educators or teachers who are competent and professional in their fields are needed (Taufiqurrahman et al., 2022). Research conducted by Miller (2017) illustrates how powerful the RPL program designed by Middlesex University in London is in assisting teachers, pre-service teachers and early years practitioners to gain a degree that is linear with teacher status to meet the required qualifications. The results showed that the process of reflection and credit recognition of the experience had a good impact and provided students with skills for continuous professional development as teachers. The Indonesian education sector has developed the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI), one of whose roles is expected to include a system of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) so as to ensure flexibility in career development or increasing qualification levels. The implementation of RPL is increasingly important to be considered in overcoming several challenges and maintaining harmonization and RPL practices at the international level (Mulyani, 2024). This is what is done by Unesa as an RPL organizer in the PG PAUD S-1 study program in fulfilling the linearity of the academic background and increasing the professionalism of PAUD teachers.

Input

Prospective RPL participants register themselves by going through several structured stages. This process takes time in assessing evidence or portfolios that must be assessed by assessors or assessors. The portfolio assessment process in the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program requires 3 assessors Brinke et al., (2010) stated that assessors with more than one person can provide strong arguments so that it becomes a determining element in the assessment to recognize the portfolio. Not only with the uploaded portfolio evidence, prospective participants must pass the interview stage with the assessor. Through the portfolio, it can be seen the

relevance to the course to be recognized and through the interview a candidate has the opportunity to prepare additional evidence so that it can support their recognition claims listed in the portfolio (Bt Kaprawi et al., 2010). The interview process will help the assessor to make a decision based on their perception of the candidate during the interview (Whitworth et al., 2011).

Improving the competence and maintaining the quality of assessors is the most important thing in assessing the assessment of prospective participants. Unesa seeks to maintain the quality of RPL by organizing assessor training and assessor evaluation. Assessor training or assessor training is an important aspect of the process of assessing the portfolio of prospective participants and assessors must fully understand the expected results of the RPL program according to their respective fields (Conrad, 2022). The appraiser training program was then evaluated by an evaluation team. Evaluation of the appraiser training program can provide benefits in providing data and information needed to make decisions to improve the quality of the program (Faizin & Kusumaningrum, 2023). The assessor training organized not only includes how the assessment process is carried out but also assistance to prospective participants. Assistance and socialization in preparing portfolios of prospective participants in accordance with predetermined learning outcomes make it easier to adjust the recognition process. Lack of socialization and assistance to prospective participants can hinder comprehensive information about RPL and cause inappropriate and incomplete portfolio evidence (Milwan et al., 2025).

There is no distinction between the curriculum used in the regular pathway and RPL. The field experience of prospective participants is recognized by the courses contained in the curriculum that have been adjusted to the learning outcomes of the study program. The recognition process which is part of the portfolio assessment is carried out through a website that has been systemized or can be called digital-based. Digital-based assessment provides many benefits such as facilitating accessibility, increasing accuracy and objectivity in assessment and ease of obtaining valid information (Putu et al., 2020; Yudha et al., 2023). Curriculum quality assurance is carried out by referring to several provisions contained in the guidelines for the preparation of higher education curriculum and using the Outcome Based Education (OBE) approach.

Process

The learning process for the RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program uses a lecture planning tool as a guide in implementing the RPL program. The design of the learning process that is carried out systematically contains at least three things, namely learning outcomes that become learning objectives, how to achieve learning objectives through learning strategies and methods and how to assess the achievement of learning outcomes (Mendikbudristek, 2023). The practice of implementing learning is carried out with a combination of online basis using zoom software and offline by coming directly to class. Online-based learning creates flexibility for RPL participants in participating in learning even though they are not directly in the same place. Substantive use of technology by utilizing zoom is a facility that supports RPL learning (Prinsloo, 2024). The variety of learning methods used by lecturers can train participants to improve pedagogic skills that are more innovative and can be applied to their respective institutions, in this case, PAUD units. The pedagogic experience of lecturers in managing participants with different backgrounds from regular students is not an obstacle. Unesa always pays attention to the quality of learning by involving stakeholders in maintaining the quality of the curriculum in accordance with the needs in the field. Ensuring the relevance of the curriculum to labor market needs requires an evaluation of the curriculum, teaching methods and learning standards (Mulyani, 2024). Stakeholder involvement is key in revitalizing the

curriculum to face challenges and achieve effectiveness in learning so that it will impact accreditation (Antoni et al., 2025; Mardiana & Emmiyati, 2024; Solikah et al., 2024).

Product

The graduation rate and participant satisfaction are a measure of the success of the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program. The evaluation team through feedback from RPL participants can determine the suitability of the program with the needs in the field, namely PAUD units. The suitability of the academic background obtained by graduates is an asset for increasing career paths and recognition of professionalism in the field of PAUD through teacher certification obtained by participants. Teacher certification is an important role in improving the quality of education which has an impact on improving the professional competence of teachers and improving the managerial skills of teachers (Doni & Janata, 2024). Teacher certification has a positive impact on teachers, namely getting the right to receive Teacher Professional Allowances and can improve teacher welfare and can also create quality early childhood education and have an impact on increasing teacher professional competence and increasing teacher managerial skills (Doni & Janata, 2024; Nisviati & Sianturi, 2024). For PAUD teachers who are non-linear or have not earned this degree, it can be fulfilled through the S-1 PG PAUD RPL program.

The findings in this study provide important implications for universities as RPL program organizers, especially in the input aspect of an objective and transparent assessment process and expansion of collaboration with city governments and other local governments.

CONCLUSION

The RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program at the State University of Surabaya is relevant to the needs of the PAUD sector in order to meet the required educational qualifications. Structured selection stages, good mentoring, and maintained quality lectures and assessors can support the success of this program. The flexible learning process and periodic evaluations conducted show that the quality of this program continues to improve. Indicators of program success are quite comprehensive, looking at the real impact on the careers of S-1 PG PAUD RPL program participants.

Overall, the RPL program organized by the State University of Surabaya in the S-1 PG PAUD study program positively contributes to improving the professionalism and competence of PAUD teachers in Surabaya. The affirmation police carried out in collaboration with the Surabaya city government effectively supports the development of human resources, especially PAUD teachers. However, challenges in implementation need to be anticipated, especially in terms of increasing prospective participants understanding of portfolios that are in accordance with learning outcomes and the optimal role of assessors in the recognition process.

The findings in this study provide implications for managers of the Recognition of Prior Learning program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program to expand collaboration with city government and other local governments so that the competency and qualification needs of PAUD teachers can be met as a whole. In addition, further training and fulfilling the required resources can provide a more objective and transparent assessment process and assistance to prospective participants. These recommendations aim to ensure that the RPL program can be implemented optimally and provide maximum benefits for participants.

This research focuses on the implementation of the RPL program in the S-1 PG PAUD study program at the State University of Surabaya. Future research is recommended to expand the geographical context and sample variation to obtain an explanation of the RPL implementation in the CIPP model in similar teacher education fields. In addition, a mixed-methods approach can be adopted to analyze the relationship between variables, such as

lecturer's perceptions, the readiness of the institution that organizes the program, and student's experiences.

Conflict of interests

There are no known conflicts of interest associated with this publication.

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