IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF GRADUATES OF EARLY CHILDREN EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM THROUGH SPMI

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Abstract

This study aims to describe a improving the quality of graduates of the Early Childhood Education Study Program as an effort to improve the quality of education at the Nusantara Islamic University. The research was conducted at the Early Childhood Education Study Program at Nusantara Islam University, with the subject of the Quality Assurance Unit of the Early Childhood Education Study Program, Nusantara Islamic University. The method used in this study uses a qualitative approach with the case study method. Data collection techniques through direct observation, searching documents and archives, and in-depth interviews. The results showed that there were SPMI policies and concepts in the form of academic quality standard documents and non-academic quality standard documents compiled by the Quality Assurance Unit; Quality Assurance Unit as the coordinator in the determination, implementation, evaluation, control and improvement of SPMI in the Early Childhood Education Study Program; SPMI implementation is carried out by drafting a design in the form of an SPMI cycle; The obstacles faced by leadership commitment are not optimal, the number of auditors is very limited, SPMI activities are only carried out as limited as routine steps taken in anticipation of obstacles in the form of providing experts in the implementation of SPMI, training for young auditors, fostering a spirit of quality assurance, conducting evaluations every semester. Utilization of the results of the SPMI evaluation in order to build a quality culture.

Keywords: Quality of Graduates, Early Childhood Education, SPMI

I. INTRODUCTION

The competence and professionalism of early childhood education teachers can be viewed from several aspects or dimensions.

The first, seen from the aspect of the very rapid development of science and technology, it implies the emergence of new methods and media in the learning process. According to

Muh. Ilyas Ismail (2010) the performance and competence of teachers bear the main responsibility in the transformation of student orientation from ignorance to knowledge, from dependence to independence, from unskilled to skilled. This learning methods is no longer prepare passive learners but rather active learners. Active learners are knowledgeable person who always absorbs and adapts to new information by thinking, asking, exploring, creating and developing certain ways of solving problems related to his life.

Likewise, the development of teaching materials in order to achieve the curriculum's goals must be in line with the development of science and technology. This phenomenon must be mastered by teachers and principals in early childhood education, so that they are able to develop a learning process that can bring potential students to optimize their development. Furthermore, in terms of the satisfaction of users of early childhood education institutions, increasing the competence and professionalism of teachers is a must in order to meet quality standards of educational services.

Increasing the teacher professionalism and competence can be interpreted as a process of helping prospective teachers or actual teachers who are not yet competent to become the ideal teachers who have competence and professionalism in carrying out their role as educators. According to Yunus (2016) Professional teachers are teachers who prioritize the quality of services and products, teacher services must meet the standardization of the needs of the community, nation, and users and maximize the abilities of students based on the potential and skills of each individual. Therefore, increasing the number of teachers in early childhood education is directed at building abilities while building their commitment at the same time.

Educating children from an early age based on the awareness of stakeholders which hold believes that childhood period is the most valuable time to reach the ideal future generations of the nation. The awareness of the importance of early childhood education has received considerable attention from various circles of society, government, private sector, parents, and others. The result of this concern, many from various academics, made possible the establishment of Early Childhood Education Departments at various universities or high schools. However, the development of early childhood education does not always run smoothly or it can be said that it has not been optimized by the government, private sector, or society.

Other problems faced in education development include early childhood education in Indonesia, among others, inadequate government policies regarding early childhood education in Indonesia, lack of awareness of the Indonesian people about the importance of early childhood education, lack of quality in early childhood education development, lack of quality and quantity of early childhood education teachers, some early childhood education institutions in Indonesia have not taught intellectual intelligence, and the needs of the Indonesian people for early childhood education programs have not been met. Early childhood education is very important to be implemented as the basis for the formation of the whole human personality, namely for the formation of character, noble character, intelligent, cheerful, skilled, and devoted to God Almighty. Early childhood education does not always have to be expensive or through certain places, but early childhood education can be started from home or in family education (Sudarsana, 2018).

Other problems faced in education development include early childhood education in Indonesia, among others, inadequate government policies on early childhood education in Indonesia, lack of awareness of the Indonesian people about the importance of early childhood education, lack of quality in various forms of policies in the world of education. reflected in various implementations, including standards-based assessment, school accountability, school-based management, and digital technology (Hopkins & Jackson, 2003; Trihantoyo, Nursalim & Roesminingsih, 2020). This situation requires a quick response from all education stakeholders to try to take the initiative by implementing changes to education systems and policies.

Nusantara Islamic University pioneered and developed the concept of an internal quality assurance system for higher education since 2009. The concept includes the definition of quality assurance, the implementation cycle of quality assurance, organization, documentation system, and human resources. Internal quality assurance system at Nusantara Islamic University is carried out by the Directorate of Quality Assurance which is tasked with planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating the overall quality assurance system at Nusantara Islamic University. Quality assurance aims to maintain and improve the quality of higher education in a sustainable manner, which is carried out internally to realize the vision and mission of higher education, as well as to meet the needs of stakeholders through the organizers of higher education tridharma (Bancin, 2017).

The application of the education quality assurance system in tertiary institutions refers to the Higher Education Quality Assurance Guidelines (2003: 16-19). , as well as organizing quality assurance in universities. The implementation of the quality assurance system in higher education often encounters obstacles / obstacles in the field, including; The level of awareness of education process actors about the importance of quality assurance as the needs of stakeholders is still not optimal, the commitment of internal higher education stakeholders to ensure and improve the quality of education is still lacking in understanding the concept and application of SPMPT by higher education actors is not evenly distributed, governance and guarantee work mechanisms quality has not been fully developed, efforts to empower human resources, especially for lecturers in supporting the internal quality assurance system, have not been optimal, and the use of information and communication technology to support the internal quality assurance system has not been optimal.

Universitas Islam Nusantara is one of the oldest universities in West Java, founded in 1959. The concept and application of the Higher Education Quality Assurance System at Nusantara Islamic University has been made and disseminated to all leaders, lecturers, students, and education personnel at the university and faculty levels and programs studies. The successful implementation of SPMI at Nusantara Islamic University cannot be separated from the participation of all academicians in supporting internal quality assurance activities to meet stakeholder satisfaction. Even so, some obstacles are still encountered in the application of SPMI at Nusantara Islamic University. The main obstacle that is felt is the relatively lack of commitment from leaders at the university, faculty, and study program levels, related to their position and activities as a human resource for quality assurance as well as a lecturer is still relatively lacking. Directorate of Quality Assurance Universitas Islam

Nusantara feels that there is still a lack of human resources for auditors, so that every year it programs new auditor training to achieve the ideal number of auditors. SPMI activities that have become routine have prevented improvement resulting in boredom instead.

The application of SPMI in higher institutions often encounters problems, including: (1) the awareness of education process actors on the importance of quality assurance as the needs of stakeholders is still relatively low; (2) the understanding of the concept of the education quality assurance system by internal stakeholders to improve the quality of education is still not evenly distributed; (3) the commitment of the higher education process actors in tertiary institutions, both those who lead and those who are led, to always guarantee and improve the quality of education is still relatively lacking; (4) The availability of human resources, especially auditors to support SPMI, is still not fulfilled; and (5) SPMI implementation often becomes a routine making it difficult to measure the achievement of continuous improvement.

According to Sauri, R.S (2019) stated that quality is used to show the superiority of a product or service. A product or service is said to be of good quality if it has advantages over other products or services. Meanwhile, Macdonald (2005: 6) states "A useful definition is," quality means conformance to requirements ". That allows us to measure quality. We know when we do or do not conform to requirements ". Quality means conformance to requirements. Requirements that make it possible to measure quality by knowing that something meets certain conditions to be said to be quality. According to Sauri, R.S, Hidayat, A.N, & Rostini, D (2019) stated: "the concept of quality itself is often seen as a relative measure of the

goodness of a product or service which consists of design quality and conformity quality. Design quality is a function of product specifications, while conformity quality is a measure of how far a product meets the predetermined requirements or quality specifications. In an effort to improve the quality of education, the government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, issued a policy on education quality assurance. Education quality assurance efforts by the government are then implemented into the Education Quality Assurance System (Sulaiman & Wibowo, 2016). The definition of quality in outline is a comprehensive description and characteristics of a product or service that shows its ability to meet the needs, expectations and customer satisfaction of the planning, implementation, and constraints faced in implementing the system Orientation to quality requires a quality assurance system so that quality can be increased gradually. sustainable. Quality of education in tertiary institutions is most often defined as "fitness for purpose", then quality assurance refers to the policies, attitudes, actions and procedures needed to ensure that quality is being implemented, maintained and improved. Quality assurance is intended to ensure accountability and / or to bring about improvements.

Hedwig & Polla (2006: 1-3) explains that quality assurance is a continuous routine work and must be carried out continuously and is not an ad-hoc activity. Therefore, the process of monitoring (monitoring) and evaluation needs to be applied continuously with the emphasis that this activity is not looking for mistakes but to take corrective actions continuously. The quality assurance system will produce good, creative, innovative college graduates who are able to create jobs with the knowledge and technology they have, which are indicators of

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the success of quality higher education. The education quality assurance system is a system designed to improve the quality of education in a programmed and sustainable manner through the stages of establishing, implementing, evaluating, controlling, and improving educational standards. The quality assurance system is used to produce graduates who are able to develop science and technology as an indicator of the success of quality education.

The concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) is used as an approach to improve the quality, competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of the entire organization. TQM is a people-focused management system that aims to increase customer satisfaction at a low cost. Macdonald (2005: 6) states that "TQM is therefore a change agent which is aimed at providing a customer driven organization". TQM is a change agent aimed at directing organizations to be customer oriented. Thus all activities in the organization are aimed at meeting customer needs and satisfaction. Total Quality Management does not work for the benefit of others, but focuses on customer satisfaction. This understanding is not only intended for senior managers, but for everyone in the organization.

The characteristic of a quality assurance system is that it develops and adopts standards and minimum levels of performance against assessable quality. There are two interrelated aspects of standards, namely the impact of higher education services on local communities, and the technical quality standards of the programs offered. According to Mulyasa, et al. (2020) stated that the quality of higher education is closely related to the achievement of learning objectives and graduate competency standards set by educational institutions in their strategic plans, or the conformity of

goals and competencies with established standards. in higher education includes the calculation of graduation rates and student totals, alumni absorption rates in employment and wage rates, student placement rates in further education, test scores and standards, efficient use of resources, timely written reporting and accountability, accessibility of education for everyone , class size and faculty to student ratios, teaching-based evaluation, development of students' ability to apply new learning practices, encouragement and facilitation in lifelong learning, professional development opportunities for lecturers, learning uses for students, skills development and active habits as citizens, development of critical awareness, creation of togetherness, a learning environment that is mutually respectful and reciprocal among students and lecturers, and guarantees of academic freedom for discussion for students and lecturers.

According to Mulyasa, Sauri & Aryani (2019) The implementation of a higher education quality assurance system must be supported by the availability of data and information about higher education that is accurate, complete, and up to date. The data and information are managed by a database at each university. The results of this Internal Quality Assurance System will later be used as the basis for compiling an External Quality Assurance System by Study Programs and Higher Education or re-accreditation which can later make the basis of assessment for Higher Education (Regil, Meilani, & Akbar, 2020).

Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) is a systemic activity of higher education quality assurance in tertiary institutions (internally driven), to supervise the implementation of higher education by universities on an ongoing basis (continuous improvement). SPMI is an independent

activity of the university concerned, so that the process is designed, implemented and controlled by the university itself without interference from the government. SPMI is run by universities internally to realize its vision and mission, as well as to meet the needs of stakeholders through the implementation of the Tridharma of Higher Education. The SPMI concept, as in the Minister of National Education Regulation No. 63 of 2009 concerning the Education Quality Assurance System that a university is declared qualified if: the university is able to establish and realize its vision; universities are able to translate their vision into a number of standards and derivative standards; universities are able to implement, control; develop a number of standards and derived standards in the items to meet the needs of stakeholders. Higher Education Quality Assurance Guidelines (2003: 16-18) further states that the application of SPMI in tertiary institutions requires conditions in order to achieve its objectives, namely: Commitment, Mental Attitude, Organizing. The same vision and perception of the academic community, especially lecturers and education staff, to always plan all work to support the achievement of goals. Planning for this work is very important as a framework for measuring work success, so that continuous quality improvement can be realized. On the other hand, the success of SPMI implementation also needs to be supported by a strong SPMI organization with its independence to ensure the quality of education through internal quality assurance activities. The SPMI organization is expected to be able to foster a supportive attitude from all components in the tertiary institution towards efforts to guarantee the quality of education. External Quality Assurance System is a systemic activity of assessing the feasibility of programs and / or higher education by the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) or institutions. independent outside universities recognized by the government, to oversee the implementation of higher education for and on behalf of the community as a form of public accountability. The existence of BAN-PT is regulated in Government Regulation Number 19 Year 2005 Article 1 point 27, which states: "The National Accreditation Board for Higher Education, hereinafter referred to as BAN-PT, is an independent evaluation body that determines the feasibility of programs and / or educational units at the tertiary level with refers to the National Education Standards".

External monitoring or assurance includes a variety of quality evaluations carried out by individuals or agencies external to higher education institutions, including accreditation at the institutional level and teaching and quality assessment programs for research, audits or reviews of standard institutional and monitoring procedures. The essence of SPME or accreditation is an assessment of the feasibility and quality assurance of higher education or study programs conducted by independent organizations or bodies outside of higher education (external quality review). In the implementation of SPME, the quality of the tertiary institution / study program is the totality of the conditions and characteristics of the input, process, and output or service as measured by the SNP which determines and reflects the quality of the relevant higher education / study program.

This study aims to determine the application of an internal quality assurance system in an effort to strengthen the governance of study programs at the Nusantara Islamic University, in this case the Early Childhood Education Study Program. Specifically, this study aims to: describe the

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implementation of internal quality assurance in the Early Childhood Education Study Program, as well as as a whole at the Nusantara Islamic University, through a process of evaluation and utilization of the results of implementing an internal quality assurance system in order to strengthen sustainable management of study programs at the University Islam Nusantara. The results of this study are expected to be able to enrich the knowledge and knowledge about the application of SPMI to improve the quality of higher education held by the community in Indonesia.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with the case study method. According to Yin (2013: 1), a case study is a strategy that is more suitable for research studies that the main question is pleased with how or whay. In addition, case studies are used when the researchers only have the opportunity to control the events under investigation, and if the research is conducted focus lies on contemporary phenomena (present) in the context of real lift.

This research was conducted at the Directorate of Quality Assurance, Quality Assurance Group and Quality Assurance Unit of Universitas Isam Nusantara. The research implementation starts from March 2019 to June 2019. The target or subject of this research is the Directorate of Quality Assurance, the Quality Assurance Group and the Quality Assurance Unit of the Early Childhood Education Study Program of the Islamic Nusantara University along with all parts and personnel involved in internal quality assurance activities at Universitas Islam Nusantara, taken from the leadership of the Directorate of Quality Assurance, Cluster Quality Assurance and Quality Assurance Unit and staff. The object of this research is the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System by the Quality Assurance Unit and the Early Childhood Education Study Program which includes the policies, goals and objectives of the Quality Assurance Unit. The policies and concepts of the Internal Quality Assurance System include Standard Setting, Standard Implementation, Standard Evaluation, Standard Control and Standard Improvement. The data collected in this study a qualitative data derived from the data collecting by using techniques pngumpulan data that has been prepared. The instrument for collecting data in qualitative research is the researcher himself. Researcher is a key instrument equipped with other supporting instruments in the form of observation guides, interview guides, and documentation study guides.

Researchers conducted direct observation of the various activities on the subject of research, observe, and record the facilities and infrastructure that exist in the Directorate Penjamianan Quality, Cluster Penjamianan Quality, Unit for Quality Assurance and Prorgram Study of Early Childhood Education, the existence of human resources, as well as instruments and equipment technology information and communication are utilized in the application of internal quality assurance system. Aspects of the documentation in this research by collecting documents such as letters terkit with activities SPMI, announcement official on SPMI, report execution activities and monitirng SPMI, the articles relating to SPMI, information activities SPMI in the environment of Universitas Islam Nusantara , document activities, document services, document organization, organization structure, including budgetary documents relating to the implementation of the internal quality assurance system at the UPM and the Early Childhood Education Program.

III. DISCUSSION

The improvement of the quality of graduates of the Early Age Education Study Program at the Universitas Islam Nusantara has become a necessity that must be continuously carried out by the management in response to the demands of the community for quality and competitive education.

Nusantara Islamic University implements quality assurance by the Directorate of Quality Assurance since June 28, 2009, in accordance with the Rector's Decree Number: 47-SK / UIN / VI / 2009. In accordance with the Organizational Structure and Work Procedures, the Directorate of Quality Assurance at Universitas Islam Nusantara is directly under the Rector. The duties and functions of the Directorate of Quality Assurance at Universitas Islam Nusantara are: a) Compile and develop various standards and guidelines as a reference for implementing assurance for quality education, research and community service and academic administration; b) Developing quality standards in the fields of education, research, and community service that refer to international standards; c) Coordinating the implementation of education quality assurance activities, research and community service, as well as academic administration from university level to study programs; d) Reviewing and reporting on the results of the implementation of quality assurance in a cycle for all units and staff at Universitas Islam Nusantara; e) Delivering recommendations to the Chancellor and other leaders as input for continuous quality improvement. The Directorate of Quality Assurance of Universitas Islam Nusantara is assisted by a quality assurance organization at the faculty / graduate school level, namely the Quality Assurance Group and the Quality Assurance Unit at the Study Program level. Structure and Mechanism of Higher Education Quality Assurance System stipulated in Permendikbud No. 50 of 2014 concerning the Higher Education Quality Assurance System as follows: The structure of the DIKTI Quality Assurance System is structured in a structure consisting of an Internal Quality Assurance System which is a systemic activity of higher education quality assurance by each university autonomously or independently to control and improve the implementation of higher education planned and sustainable; External Quality Assurance System is an assessment activity through accreditation to determine the feasibility of study programs and universities; PDDikti is a collection of data and information on the implementation of higher education for all tertiary institutions in Indonesia which is integrated nationally.

In the implementation of the quality assurance system in the Early Childhood Teacher Education Study Program, there are weaknesses and strengths. This is related to the fulfillment of eight education quality standards, as has become a DIKTI policy that must be implemented in full. This refers to the provisions of the Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education (2010: 15). Stating that the Internal Quality Assurance System in higher education is carried out entirely by the university itself, without government interference.

The implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System in the Early Childhood Education Departments are carried out through several stages from socialization of the points of the Internal Quality Assurance System, technical assistance for the study program; socialization of Internal Quality Audit and Study Program Self Evaluation Instruments, filling in Study Program Self Evaluation; implementation of the Internal

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Quality Audit; corrective action / corrective action; management review meetings at the faculty / graduate school level to discuss audit findings and improve the quality of study programs; university-level management review meetings, to discuss findings obtained at the course of study that cannot be completed at the course level; and the faculty will be brought up to the University level.

The achievement in the implementation of the quality assurance system in Early Childhood Education Departments has been supported by the availability of quality policies and quality manuals which are used as the basis for implementing study program governance, such as the existence of formal documents on organizational structures and work procedures that are equipped with their duties and functions, and have implemented consistently and sustainably. The quality assurance department has a fairly complete document on the admission system for new students, including selection policies, selection criteria, decision-making systems, and admission procedures. The number of permanent lecturers assigned to teach courses in the field of expertise in accordance with the core competencies of the study program, with 8 permanent lecturers. Budget realization support for resource development is still not optimal, and is still managed centrally at the university. Evaluation and updating of the curriculum is carried out periodically every 5 years involving internal and external stakeholders and is reviewed by experts. Having a research roadmap that covers a research agenda for lecturers and students as well as scientific development of study programs by considering interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches.

Due to the lack of commitment from the leadership, there are constraints in implementing the internal quality assurance system. This constraints are resolved by providing personnel who are indeed experts in quality assurance. Leaders who have multiple tasks, both as educators and as quality assurance personnel, feel that their work results are not optimal. The problem with the lack of number of auditors owned by the Directorate of Quality Assurance is pursued by programming new auditor training. The training program for new auditors and refreshing for old auditors is conducted intensively every year. Constraints to the Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System are often trapped into routine activities, faced by refreshing and building good morale at the level of the leadership of the University, Faculty and Study Program as well as the auditors themselves. The Directorate of Quality Assurance of the Nusantara Islamic University has also created programs that bring awareness to the important position of quality assurance, such as meeting regularly in auditors' refresher activity forums and improving quality In addition, the interaction with internal higher education quality assurance activists in the SPMI-DIKTI forum and BAN-PT.

The application of the results of the internal quality assurance system is used internally to gradually improve the quality of education. The findings in the application of the internal quality assurance system will be used as input to improve standards and improve for the better. As for the implementation of the internal quality assurance system externally used in connection with the preparation for accreditation of external parties, in this case the National Accreditation Board. The Directorate of Quality Assurance has also assisted the university in preparing the accreditation form for the BAN-PT institution. Utilization of results The

application of the internal quality assurance system at Nusantara Islamic University is also used for accreditation preparation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The concept of the Internal Quality Assurance System in Early Childhood Education Departments of Universitas Islam Nusantara is defined as a continuous process of improving the quality of the education process through the active process of determining, implementing, evaluating, controlling and improving the on-going education process. In the management system, Early Childhood Education Departments is also conducting self-evaluation, internal quality audits, and benchmarking to set new standards which is known as the quality assurance cycle. The Internal Quality Assurance System in Early Childhood Education Departments at Universitas Islam Nusantara is carried out by compiling a design of an internal quality assurance system which is operationally called the Cycle of an internal quality assurance system which is carried out following a period of one year. Furthermore, the obstacles faced in implementing the internal quality assurance system at the Nusantara Islamic University including at the Study Program level are the relatively lack of leadership commitment, the number of auditors is still limited, the internal quality assurance system activities are often trapped into routine activities. The steps taken to deal with these obstacles are to provide staff who are experts in the field of quality assurance, program the training of new auditors and refresh the old auditors to be carried out intensively, building good enthusiasm for University Leaders, Faculty / Postgraduate Schools, and Study Programs. Evaluation of the implementation of the internal quality assurance system at the Islamic University of Nusantara is carried out annually, by asking for input from auditors, from the leaders of the audited faculties / graduate schools and study programs, and university leaders. As for the benefits of the implementation of the internal quality assurance system in Early Childhood Education Departments of the Islamic Nusantara University internally to improve the quality of education, foster a better work spirit, raise awareness to build a quality culture. Externally it is used in relation to preparation for accreditation.

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