

Study on Governance and Service of the In-Service Teacher Certification Program for Raudhatul Athfal from the Perspective of PPG (Teacher Professional Education) Participants

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This research aims to examine various aspects related to the implementation of the In-Service Teacher Professional Program (PPG) for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, including the program's administrative procedures, governance structure, program implementation, and the outcomes resulting from the program's implementation.

Design/methods/approach – Conducted at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in 2022, this study utilized a case study design. A mixed approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods was employed to analyze the management and implementation of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers. Research participants and respondents included program managers, partner lecturers, and program participants.

Findings – The study reveals that the administration and governance of the In-Service PPG program were implemented efficiently and effectively, facilitated by information technology and cooperation among various government entities and educational institutions. Implementing this program has improved participants' competencies, such as understanding early childhood education and developing teaching skills. The outputs from this program include competency development in designing and implementing appropriate learning for young children, involving parents, and integrating religious values.

Research implications – The findings of this study underscore the importance of enhancing teachers' competencies and professionalism to improve education quality in Indonesia. However, certification programs like the In-Service PPG represent only one aspect of enhancing teacher professionalism; other necessary steps include post-certification quality assurance and continuous teacher development. This study also highlights the significance of programs like the In-Service PPG in achieving these goals.

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1. Introduction

One of the educational challenges in Indonesia stems from the generally low quality of teachers (Disas, 2017). Teachers are a crucial component of education and play a vital role in the development of human resources. Competent and professional teachers are essential for producing high-quality human resources (Clercq, 2013). Therefore, every teacher must have adequate competencies. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia has made efforts to enhance the competence and professionalism of teachers in Indonesia, both those currently in position (incumbent teachers) and those not yet in position (teacher candidates). These efforts are realized through teacher professional



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certification as mandated by Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. Teacher certification aims to improve teachers' professionalism according to established competency standards (Sachs, 2016; Wardoyo et al., 2017).

In-service educator competency certificates can be obtained through various means, such as portfolio assessment, PLPG (Teacher Professional Education and Training), direct acceptance, and PPG (Teacher Professional Education). Unfortunately, most teachers in Indonesia generally do not have adequate qualifications to participate in portfolio assessments or direct acceptance. This situation has led to the prevalence of certification through the PPG route (Riyad & Munakib, 2019). They are referring to Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards, which was amended to Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013 on Amendments to Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards and further amended by Government Regulation Number 13 of 2015 on the Second Amendment to Regulation Number 19 of 2005. Teacher certification encompasses all levels of education, from early childhood education (PAUD) to higher education (lecturers). Thus, the certification process must be tailored to the target participants.

The PAUD education level is a stage that cannot be equated with other education levels. PAUD education focuses on children's character, not academic development (Istiqomah, 2017). Therefore, a specific curriculum is required to develop PAUD teacher competencies due to the diverse characteristics of students in various regions.

The implementation of PPG involves various components and resources. Therefore, appropriate management is required to ensure PPG's successful implementation. In practice, the governance of teacher certification is carried out by two central ministries, namely the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The organization of PPG involves universities with specific qualifications (Latiana, 2019). According to Permendiknas No. 11 of 2011, the qualifications for universities organizing PPG are those that conduct accredited educational personnel procurement programs according to the subject field of the certified teachers.

Although teacher certification has been implemented for some time, the outcomes still need to improve education quality significantly. Prasojo et al. (2017) found that implementing the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) showed less than satisfactory results, evidenced by PPG participants' final exam pass rate being around 50%. Other research indicates that not all certified teachers perform well in education. The study by Siswandari and Susilaningih (2013) showed that only 37% of certified teachers possessed good pedagogical skills. Moreover, Istiarini and Sukanti (2012) discovered that teacher certification only supported teacher performance by 16.8%. These facts indicate that implementing teacher certification, mainly PPG, requires evaluation in general.

Another factor that requires attention is the PPG curriculum. According to Prasojo et al. (2017), teachers need different competencies depending on the factual problems where they teach. The study by Rambitan and Hardoko (2016) showed that implementing PPG competencies could have been more effective because it did not meet regional needs, making curriculum diversification essential.

These various issues indicate the suboptimal management of teacher certification in Indonesia. Therefore, an evaluation of teacher certification's current management and implementation is needed. Improving the quality of PPG outcomes is increasingly crucial for early childhood education (PAUD/RA) because this educational level is the initial stage of community education.

This study formulated several research questions based on the background described. These research questions include:

- a. How is the administration of PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers currently implemented?
- b. What governance structure is applied in the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta?

- c. What is the management process of PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta?
- d. What is the performance of the PPG Daljab implementation for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta?
- e. What are the competency achievements of PPG Daljab participants for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta?
- f. What outcomes are produced from implementing PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta?

These questions will be the focus of the research to examine various aspects related to implementing PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Through this research, it is expected to gain a deep understanding of the administration, governance, management, implementation performance, participant competency achievements, and the outcomes of the PPG Daljab program.

This study examines various aspects of implementing the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. This research investigates the program's administrative procedures, analyzes its governance structure, and evaluates its implementation process. Additionally, this study will analyze the performance of implementing the PPG Daljab program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Furthermore, this research will evaluate the competency achievements of the participants and examine the outcomes of implementing the PPG Daljab program. Through this investigation, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the PPG Daljab program for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Teachers and Education*

The low quality of teachers is one of the factors contributing to the poor quality of education in Indonesia (Disas, 2017). Teachers play a central role in education; thus, for education to be delivered with good quality, teachers who meet the criteria of professionalism as educators are required (Gaffar, 2007).

Professional teachers significantly influence the quality of human resources (De Monte, 2013). An experienced teacher can solve student problems, ensuring optimal learning performance (Fahmi et al., 2011). Professional teachers are sensitive to the evolving issues in education, from both the teachers' and students' perspectives, continually striving to adapt. Consequently, their competencies grow.

In educating, teachers should provide a pleasant learning experience that stimulates students' critical thinking. Unfortunately, many teachers in Indonesia's educational practice lack professionalism (Kartowagiran, 2011). This is one of the obstacles to address when managing educational human resources in Indonesia.

2.2. *Competence & Professionalism of Teachers*

Education is a process that requires well-planned techniques/methods, goals, and targeted outcomes. Thus, education is not merely a process of conveying information or knowledge but goes beyond that. Therefore, a teacher should have adequate competencies to be an educator. These include pedagogical, social, personality, and professional competencies (Wardoyo et al., 2017).

Having competencies does not mean that a teacher also has professionalism. Competence indicates a teacher's ability related to a particular skill, whereas professionalism

refers to attitudes, behaviors, and habits. This aspect of professionalism might not be possessed by teachers even if they have good competencies (Kartowagiran, 2011).

To improve education quality, the development of competencies must be accompanied by increased professionalism. Professional teachers use their competencies to enhance their teaching performance (Tanang & Abu, 2014). Experienced teacher will always seek to improve and develop their competencies in new skills required to provide the best possible education.

2.3. *Early Childhood Education (PAUD/RA)*

Raudhatul Athfal (RA) is a formal education level equivalent to Kindergarten (TK), supervised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Zahroh, 2014). Like TK, RA provides learning experiences for children to stimulate brain development (Bustami et al., 2012). Therefore, teachers are required to understand children's conditions individually.

RA teachers are responsible for stimulating and monitoring children's intellectual growth, skills, attitudes, and personalities (Zahroh, 2014). Each child has different intelligences, both in type and level. Therefore, the stimulation process must refer to their interests and talents and cannot be standardized. Teachers often need to pay more attention to this.

The emphasis on stimulating children's intelligence at the RA education stage distinguishes it from higher education levels. Therefore, competent and professional teachers are needed so that the phase of academic identity development is well-spent.

2.4. *Competency Standards*

Given the importance of education quality for society, the government strives to standardize teacher competencies to create professional teachers. Thus, initially a general occupation, teaching has become a professional field. Referring to Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005, educators must have adequate educational qualifications in relevant fields and professional certificates.

Sanaky (2005) argued that a teacher should possess three essential competencies: professional, social, and personal competencies. Meanwhile, according to Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 137 of 2014, article 25, teachers must have four competencies: pedagogical, social, personality, and professional.

2.5. *Development of Teacher Competence and Professionalism*

Developing teacher competencies and professionalism is a process that every country must undergo to improve its education quality. Most teachers consider education merely an activity to deliver lesson content (Zahroh, 2014). This needs to be corrected, as the function of a teacher is to educate, not just to teach. Therefore, teachers must also integrate other life values and norms in implementing education.

The development of teacher professionalism is needed and is a continuous process due to the ever-evolving educational landscape (Gonzalez & Maxwell, 2018). A critical aspect of enhancing teacher professionalism is assessing their competencies. In this context, a teacher's competency is demonstrated through competency certificates. Educator certification is needed to recognize that a teacher has been tested for competency and is deemed fit to be an educator.

2.6. *Teacher Certification*

Efforts to enhance teacher professionalism are carried out through certification. Since the issuance of Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005, possessing an educator certificate has become a requirement to be an educator. In Indonesia, teacher competency certification began in 2005. Certification is conducted for prospective and active teachers through several processes, including portfolio assessment, Teacher Professional Education and Training (PLPG), direct certificate issuance, and Teacher Professional Education (PPG). However, since 2018, PLPG has been discontinued, so the implementation of teacher certification has been carried out with PPG (Murdiyanto, 2020).

In-service teacher professional education (PPG-Daljab) is provided as an alternative for teachers to obtain a professional educator certificate if they still need to pass the portfolio assessment. The organization of PPG is intended for teachers to achieve specific competencies to receive a professional certificate (Wantoro et al., 2019). Through PPG, teachers are expected to enhance their knowledge and professionalism (Disas, 2017).

2.7. *Governance of Teacher Certification*

The implementation of PPG aims to ensure that teachers have a spirit of professionalism in carrying out their mandate as educators. Unfortunately, certification is only a process that improves the welfare of some teachers, so there are many cases of low efficiency in implementing PPG. Implementing teacher certification in Indonesia has proven less effective in increasing teacher competency and professionalism. This is evident from the teacher's teaching and student learning performance, which did not develop significantly after obtaining a professional certificate (Kusumawardhani, 2017).

Teacher certification, which costs a large budget, should provide relevant returns for developing the world of education in Indonesia. An indication of the impact of certification should be seen from student learning performance. However, in reality, this is not achieved. Certification has significantly improved teacher economics, but not their competence and professionalism as educators (Fahmi et al., 2011). The implementation of teacher certification should be carried out with strict supervision, not only during the process but also after the issuance of the professional certificate. For example, after certification, quality assurance efforts should be implemented by implementing rewards and sanctions for certified teachers.

3. *Theoretical Framework*

3.1. *Teachers as Professionals*

Teachers are the spearhead of the educational system in any country. Therefore, teachers must understand their position, role, and function within the educational system and human development (Tanang & Abu, 2014). Competent and professional teachers are needed to develop human resources to proceed well, thus ensuring the educational system produces high-quality and competitive human resources (Sachs, 2016; DeMonte, 2013).

Teaching has been recognized as a profession in various countries, especially developed ones, requiring every teacher to possess a professional ethos as an educator (Mayer & Mills, 2021; Tanang & Abu, 2014). Teachers must dedicate their thoughts and efforts to the community's education as professionals. Teacher professionalism is demonstrated by a culture of good performance, accountability, and high standards in educational implementation (Mayer & Mills, 2021).

3.2. *Development of Teacher Professionalism*

Thus far, Indonesia's teacher education system and teacher recruitment have yet to emphasize the importance of teacher professionalism (Utami, 2019). As a result, many educators who need an educational background are found in various academic institutions (Jakaria, 2014). The transition of teaching to a recognized profession is one of the efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia (Gaffar, 2007; Jamaluddin, 2014). As a profession to be recognized as a teacher (professional), one must meet the competency standards set by the state. This policy implies that an education graduate cannot immediately become a teacher but must undergo a competency testing process first (Kusantati, 2010).

3.3. *Certification as a Medium for Developing Professionalism*

Educator professional certification is a necessary process to produce professional educators (Khlebnikova, 2012). A teacher or prospective teacher's competency is proven through the certification process. A competency certificate should guarantee a teacher's professionalism.

Teacher certification in Indonesia is conducted through the Teacher Professional Education (PPG), organized by universities appointed by the relevant ministry. To pass the certification, a teacher must undergo a series of competency tests that have been set, including pedagogical, social, personality, and professional competencies. With these competencies, teachers are expected to become more skilled in their educator duties (Latiana, 2019).

3.4. *Management of Certification (Competency Standards, Implementers, Responsible Parties, Supervisors)*

The implementation of teacher professional certification certainly requires professional governance as well. Implementing teacher certification in Indonesia involves various universities (Fauzi, 2016), thus involving varied management processes. Management is a process that involves multiple types of resources, including infrastructure, facilities, and human resources.

Management involves sequential processes such as planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. These processes should be applied continuously so that management constraints can be identified, addressed (solutions found), and corrected.

3.5. *Evaluation of Certification Management*

Field facts show that the current teacher certification process needs to be more effective in enhancing teacher professionalism (Kartowagiran, 2011). This raises questions about how the teacher certification process is conducted. Therefore, an evaluation of certification management is needed to ensure the certification process is carried out well and by its objectives.

Management evaluation is necessary to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of management performance. Evaluations should be conducted on various management components and at each management stage. Thus, it can be identified which components and processes need improvement.

4. Methods

4.1. *Time & Location*

The research was conducted at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in 2022.

4.2. *Research Design*

The research design implemented in this study is a case study. This research examines the specific implementation of the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. It uses a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods.

4.3. *Research Object*

The object of this study is the management and implementation of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers, including pre-implementation, during implementation, and post-implementation of the PPG.

4.4. *Data Sources and Respondents*

The informants in this study include managers, partner lecturers, and participants of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Respondents were determined purposively with the following inclusion criteria:

- a. Managers
 - Actively managing the implementation of PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
 - Have been involved in the implementation of PPG Daljab at least twice
- b. Lecturers
 - Active lecturers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
 - Currently and have been lecturers in the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

4.5. *Data Collection*

Data collection was conducted through structured interviews. The interview instrument was a questionnaire specifically designed to extract information related to the management and implementation of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The research questionnaire was prepared in a digital format using Google Forms. Data collection was carried out online by distributing the questionnaire to respondents. During the data collection process, the researcher assisted by giving directions to respondents if they encountered difficulties.

4.6. *Data Processing and Analysis*

Data obtained from the interviews were tabulated and coded. This process aims to identify identical respondent responses and simplify the research findings to make them easier to interpret. Data analysis was carried out descriptively and represented in tables and graphs.

5. Results

5.1. *Current Administration Implementation of PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal Teachers*

Informant A, an active manager of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, shared, "The current administration of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers is

structured and well-documented. We have developed an information technology-based administration system that simplifies the registration process, archiving of participant data, and reporting. All participants must fill out an online registration form and complete the necessary documents, such as personal identification, diplomas, previous educator certificates, and recommendation letters."

Informant B, a lecturer involved in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, stated, "In terms of administration, we have a team responsible for checking the completeness of the participants' documents, verifying data, and conducting the registration process. We also hold briefing sessions related to administration so that participants understand the procedures and requirements that must be met. We continuously monitor and coordinate the administration during implementation to prevent obstacles or oversights."

Informant C, a participant of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, expressed their experience,

"The administration process of the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga runs smoothly and is organized. I received clear guidance regarding the administrative requirements and procedures. Registration was done online, and I also received assistance from the admin team if I had any questions or technical issues. All the documents I submitted were carefully recorded and verified."

Proposition:

The current administration of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is conducted in a structured and well-documented manner, with the development of an information technology-based administration system that eases the registration process, archiving of participant data, and reporting, as well as providing clear guidance on the requirements and administrative procedures.

5.2. Governance Implemented in the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal Teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

Informant A, an active manager of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, explained,

"The governance of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is based on collaboration between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. Institutions like UIN Sunan Kalijaga act as organizers of the PPG with qualifications according to the field of study of the certified teachers. We have a management team consisting of lecturers, administrative managers, and other support staff working together in planning, organizing, and implementing this program."

Informant B, a lecturer involved in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, explained, "The governance applied in the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga involves planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling processes. We have operational guidelines that regulate all aspects of the program's implementation, including schedules, curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment. A regular monitoring and evaluation system ensures the program's sustainability and improvement."

Informant C, a participant of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, shared their perspective,

"In the PPG Daljab, the program's governance appears well-structured and coordinated. I experienced smooth communication between lecturers, program managers, and participants. Information related to schedules, learning materials, and assignments is provided. I also noticed an evaluation and feedback process that helps improve the program's quality."

Proposition:

The governance of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is based on the collaboration between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, with the role of universities as PPG organizers

and the presence of a management team working together in planning, organizing, and implementing the program.

5.3. *Management of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal Teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*

Informant A, an active manager of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, detailed,

"The management of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is programmed and structured. The program has a pre-determined schedule, which includes various activities such as lectures, teaching practices, observations, and competency assessments. Each stage of the program is executed according to the curriculum that has been prepared."

Informant B, a lecturer involved in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, explained, "In managing the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers, participants are provided with learning materials relevant to the needs and characteristics of early childhood. They are also invited to participate in teaching practices in the field, both in partner schools and within the UIN Sunan Kalijaga environment. Observations and feedback from lecturers and fellow participants are also essential to this management process."

Informant C, a participant of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, shared their perspective, "The management of the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga runs well and is organized. I followed lectures and teaching practices according to the pre-determined schedule. The lecturers provided guidance and directions that helped me develop teaching skills. Moreover, including observations and joint reflections allows us to improve our performance as prospective teachers."

Proposition:

The management of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is conducted in a programmed and structured manner, with a pre-determined schedule, a prepared curriculum, relevant learning materials, field teaching practices, observations, feedback, and guidance that assist participants in developing teaching abilities.

5.4. *Performance of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal Teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*

Informant A, an active manager of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, explained,

"The performance of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta is quite satisfactory. We involve qualified and experienced lecturers in the field of early childhood education. They are responsible for preparing materials and conducting lessons meeting participants' needs. We also conduct regular evaluations to monitor the participants' performance and provide constructive feedback."

Informant B, a lecturer involved in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, shared their view,

"The performance of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is quite good. Participants can hone their teaching skills through direct practice in the field. Additionally, the observations and feedback we provide help participants improve their performance. The final exam results also show an adequate pass rate."

Informant C, a participant of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, provided their feedback,

"The performance of the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is excellent. I am supported by having competent lecturers and direct practice experience in partner schools. I feel more prepared and confident after participating in this program. Our instructors' performance is also continuously improved through the observations and feedback we receive."

Proposition:

The performance of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta is considered satisfactory, involving qualified and experienced lecturers, preparing appropriate materials, conducting practical learning in the field, performing regular evaluations, providing constructive feedback, and achieving adequate pass rate.

5.5. *Competency Achievement of PPG Daljab Participants for Raudhatul Athfal Teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*

Informant A, an active manager of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, stated,

"The competency achievement of PPG Daljab participants for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is quite satisfactory. They have successfully improved their understanding of learning concepts suitable for early childhood. Participants can also develop teaching skills, including using appropriate methods and strategies and understanding the characteristics of students at that educational level."

Informant B, a lecturer involved in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, revealed, "PPG Daljab participants for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga show good competency achievement. They have mastered the basic principles of early childhood education, developed relevant curricula, and applied child-centered learning strategies. Additionally, participants can manage classrooms well and build positive relationships with students."

Informant C, a participant of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, shared their perspective,

"My competency has increased after participating in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. I understand more about the characteristics of early childhood and how to face challenges in teaching them. I have also succeeded in developing better lesson planning and applying it in the field with satisfactory results."

Proposition:

The competency achievement of PPG Daljab participants for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga is considered satisfactory, with an improvement in understanding of learning concepts suitable for early childhood, development of teaching skills, mastery of basic principles of early childhood education, development of relevant curricula, application of child-centered learning strategies, ability to manage classrooms well, and building positive relationships with students.

5.6. *Outcomes Produced from the Implementation of PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal Teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga*

Informant A, an active manager of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, stated,

"The outcomes from implementing the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga can be considered satisfactory. Participants successfully developed their competencies in designing and implementing learning suitable for early childhood. They were able to create a stimulative learning environment, involve parents, and integrate religious values effectively."

Informant B, a lecturer involved in the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, revealed, "The outcomes produced from the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga are very positive. Participants developed diverse lesson plans involving playful and creative approaches and improved their evaluation and assessment skills. They also developed the social and emotional abilities of students holistically."

Informant C, a participant of the PPG for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, shared their perspective,

"Implementing the PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga produced beneficial outcomes for me as a teacher. I developed a rich and innovative learning portfolio and received constructive feedback from

lecturers and fellow participants. Additionally, I enhanced my skills in designing extracurricular activities relevant to the characteristics of early childhood."

Proposition:

The outcomes produced from the implementation of the PPG Daljab for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga are considered satisfactory, with the development of participants' competencies in designing and implementing learning suitable for early childhood, creating a stimulative learning environment, involving parents, and integrating religious values effectively. Moreover, participants succeeded in developing diverse lesson plans involving playful and creative approaches, improving evaluation and assessment abilities, and holistically developing students' social and emotional skills.

6. Discussion

The research on implementing the In-Service Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG Daljab) for Raudhatul Athfal (RA) teachers at the State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga demonstrates significant development in its management and implementation. In this context, previous research supports the importance of enhancing teachers' competencies and professionalism (Disas, 2017; Tanang & Abu, 2014), which also serves as the main focus of the current study.

The findings of this study indicate good governance of the PPG Daljab, based on cooperation between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, in line with prior literature that emphasizes the importance of enhancing teacher professionalism through certification and continuous training (Gonzalez & Maxwell, 2018; Murdiyanto, 2020).

A notable finding is the satisfactory performance of the PPG Daljab implementation at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, involving qualified and experienced lecturers. This positively impacts the participants' competencies, with an improvement in understanding concepts of early childhood education. This aligns with previous literature that stresses the importance of having teachers who can understand children's conditions individually at the RA level (Zahroh, 2014; Bustami et al., 2012).

Meanwhile, the outcomes produced from implementing the PPG Daljab for RA teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga are also deemed satisfactory, with an improvement in participants' competencies in designing and implementing learning appropriate for early childhood. This marks a significant leap forward in enhancing the quality of education in Indonesia (Disas, 2017) and specifically in improving the quality of teaching at the RA level, which has been identified as an area requiring special attention in previous literature (Zahroh, 2014).

However, despite these positive findings, it must be noted that previous literature has indicated that the implementation of teacher certification in Indonesia still needs to be more effective in enhancing teachers' competencies and professionalism (Kusumawardhani, 2017; Fahmi et al., 2011). Therefore, even though these findings indicate improvements, further efforts are still needed to ensure that these competencies and professionalism can be maintained and enhanced after the program's completion.

7. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and literature review, it can be concluded that improving the quality of education in Indonesia needs to be supported by competent and professional teachers. Teacher competence and professionalism become two crucial elements in determining the quality of education. This aligns with the literature indicating that the low quality of education in Indonesia is associated with the low quality of teachers.

In the context of the In-Service Teacher Professional Education (PPG-Daljab) for Raudhatul Athfal teachers at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, the research shows that the administration and governance of

this program are structured and effective. The use of information technology in administration, cooperation between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, and the involvement of a skilled management team in planning, organizing, and implementing this program contribute to improving teacher competence and professionalism.

The implementation of PPG Daljab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga has shown satisfactory performance in enhancing the understanding of concepts suitable for early childhood learning, teaching skills development, and relevant curricula, which aligns with previous literature. Furthermore, this program has successfully created a stimulative learning environment, involved parents in the educational process, and effectively integrated religious values.

However, it must be remembered that certification like PPG Daljab is just one of the many efforts required to enhance teacher professionalism. For sustainable impact, post-certification monitoring and quality assurance are needed, as well as continuous professional development for teachers.

Overall, this research reaffirms the importance of improving teacher competencies and professionalism in enhancing the quality of education and the role of PPG Daljab as one of the instruments in this effort.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

Erni Munastiwi conceived the presented idea. Sri Sumarni developed the theory. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

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Data availability statement

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Declaration of Interest's statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

Additional information

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