Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation to Improve RPL Implementation Governance at Politeknik Negeri Bali

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Abstract. This study examines the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at Politeknik Negeri Bali (PNB) in the context of the Vocational Education Director General's Regulation No. 18 of 2022. Through comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of quality assurance practices, the research aims to analyze RPL execution across various study programs, identify challenges, and provide recommendations for improvement. Key findings indicate that while PNB has taken progressive steps in RPL implementation, significant variations exist among study programs. Despite strong legal foundations, gaps in assessment process standardization and quality assurance were identified. The study highlights the crucial role of Monitoring and Evaluation (Monev) in enhancing RPL governance and offers strategic recommendations for optimizing RPL implementation in vocational higher education institutions.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Vocational Higher Education

1 Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is one of the important innovations in the higher education system in Indonesia, aimed at recognizing and integrating non-formal experiences and learning into the formal education system. The implementation of RPL in vocational universities such as the Politeknik Negeri Bali (PNB) is becoming increasingly important along with the publication of Regulation of the Director General of Vocational Education Number 18 of (2022), which provides a regulatory framework for the implementation of RPL in vocational higher education environments. PNB, as one of the leading vocational education institutions in Indonesia, has taken progressive steps in implementing the RPL program. However, as with every educational innovation, the effectiveness of RPL is highly dependent on good governance. In this context, the role of Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation (Monev) becomes very crucial to ensure effective and quality RPL implementation (Hendrawana & Yulianeub, 2017). Although PNB has demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing RPL, initial research revealed significant variations in implementation

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between study programs. This indicates the need for further standardization, especially in crucial aspects such as the assessment process and quality assurance. The main challenges identified include inconsistencies in assessment methods, lack of in-depth analysis of the Semester Learning Plan (RPS), and the need to strengthen the capacity of the RPL organizing team. To improve governance and the quality of RPL implementation, PNB needs to develop a comprehensive quality assurance monitoring and evaluation system.

This system is expected to encourage process standardization, increase assessment accuracy, strengthen documentation, and facilitate the development of competency of the RPL organizing team. Furthermore, the integration of RPL into PNB's Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) is a strategic step to ensure that RPL is not just an additional program, but an integral part of the institution's identity. This research aims to analyze in depth the implementation of RPL at PNB, with a special focus on the role of Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation in improving program governance. Through a comprehensive analysis of RPL practices in various study programs, this research seeks to identify best practices, main challenges, and areas that require improvement. It is hoped that the results of this research can provide concrete recommendations for the development of RPL policies and practices in PNB, as well as contribute to academic discourse regarding the implementation of RPL in the context of vocational higher education in Indonesia.

2 Methodology

To understand in depth the implementation of RPL at the PNB, this research adopted a mixed methods approach with an explanatory sequential design (Arikunto, 1998; Sugiyono, 2020). This approach allows researchers to explore phenomena from multiple points of view, combining the strengths of quantitative and qualitative analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding (Iskandar, 2008). The research was carried out at the PNB, with a focus on six study programs that have implemented RPL.

The data collection process lasted for six months, starting from the preparation stage in April 2024 to reporting the results in July 2024. This period provided sufficient time to observe the dynamics of RPL implementation throughout one academic semester. To collect rich and diverse data, this research relies on a variety of sources and methods. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with the RPL management team in each study program, direct observation of the quality assurance process and RPL implementation, as well as questionnaires distributed to stakeholders. Meanwhile, secondary data was collected through analysis of policy documents, laws, and regulations related to RPL, and reports on the implementation of RPL at PNB.

This combination of data sources allows for triangulation that strengthens the validity of the research findings. The selection of informants was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, ensuring that those interviewed had direct knowledge and experience in implementing RPL. A total of 18 informants from six study programs were involved, each study program was represented by three people. This approach allows researchers to gain diverse perspectives but still focus on those who best understand the dynamics of RPL implementation in PNB. Data analysis was carried out

through two main approaches: descriptive qualitative and descriptive statistics. Qualitative descriptive analysis involves the process of data reduction, data presentation, and concluding. This process allows researchers to identify patterns, themes, and key insights from rich qualitative data. Meanwhile, descriptive statistical analysis is used to process quantitative data from questionnaires, presenting it in the form of tables, graphs, and descriptive statistical calculations that make interpretation easier (Miles et al., 2014). To ensure the validity of the data, this research applies source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from various informants, while method triangulation involves comparing data obtained through various collection methods. This approach strengthens the credibility of research findings. The ethical aspects of research received special attention in this study. All participants provided informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation and a full understanding of the aims of the study. Data confidentiality and informant privacy are strictly maintained, ensuring the integrity of the research process and protecting the interests of all parties involved. Through this comprehensive methodology, the research aims to provide an in-depth and nuanced picture of RPL implementation in PNB, with a particular focus on the role of Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation (Monev) in improving program governance. This multi-method approach allows for exploration that is rich in detail, enabling the identification of best practices, key challenges, and areas requiring improvement in the implementation of RPL in the Indonesian vocational higher education context.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Result

The implementation of RPL at PNB shows significant but varied developments among the six study programs studied. In-depth analysis revealed several key findings presented in the following Table 1. The implementation of RPL at the PNB shows significant complexity and variation between study programs. Even though all study programs have the necessary legal documents, indicating strong institutional commitment, but there are gaps in the specific administrative aspects of RPL. Several important documents such as the RPL Team SK and RPL Committee SK have not been updated or uploaded in several study programs, indicating the need for improvement in transparency and accountability. Marked variations are seen in the curriculum structure and course offerings for RPL. While the International Business Management and Automation Engineering Study Program offers all courses for RPL, other study programs apply certain restrictions. This diversity raises questions about standardization and equal recognition of past learning between study programs.

Table 1. Summary of RPL implementation in PNB

Aspek	PS MBP	PS MBI	PS AM	PS MPK	PS TO	PS TRU
Legal document completeness	√	√	√	√	√	√
Number of RPL credits	145	145	148	144	145	148
Number of RPL courses	42		15	47		15
Number of assessors	3	2	3	10	3	13
RPL team training	X	X	X	X	X	X
Learning methods	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
Appeal mechanism	√	X	X	X	X	X
MBKM integration	X	√	√	√	X	X
PDDikti reporting	√	√	√	√	√	√

Remarks:
PS MBP (Tourism Business Management), PS MBI (International Business Management), PS AM (Managerial Accounting), PS MPK (Construction Project Management), PS TO (Automation Engineering), PS TRU (Utility Engineering Technology)

The aspect of the RPL organizing team also shows significant variations, with the number of assessors ranging from 2 to 13 people between study programs. More crucially, no study program has provided specific training to their RPL teams, raising concerns about capacity and consistency in implementing RPL assessments.

In terms of learning methods, the majority of study programs have adopted a hybrid approach for RPL students, showing a positive adaptation to the need for flexibility. However, this variation in approach also raises questions about the consistency of RPL student learning experiences between study programs.

Quality assurance emerged as an area requiring serious attention, with only one course (Tourism Business Management) having an appeals mechanism. This indicates significant weaknesses in the fairness and transparency aspects of the RPL process in most study programs. The integration of RPL with the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) program also shows variations, with only half of the study programs having integrated MBKM into their RPL curriculum. This reflects the challenges in aligning RPL with current national education initiatives.

Nevertheless, all study programs have demonstrated compliance in reporting RPL results to PDDikti. However, the consistency and completeness of reporting still requires further research to ensure data accuracy and reliability. Overall, these findings depict a complex RPL implementation landscape at the Bali State Polytechnic, with positive achievements in several aspects but also facing significant challenges in standardization, quality assurance, and integration with national education initiatives.

These findings underscore the complexity of RPL implementation in PNB. Despite strong institutional commitment, significant variations in practice between study programs indicate the need for further standardization and increased coordination at the institutional level. In particular, areas such as training of RPL teams, standardization of assessment processes, development of comprehensive quality assurance mechanisms, and integration with national education initiatives such as MBKM require special attention.

The results of this research highlight the importance of developing a more comprehensive RPL policy at the institutional level, which can provide clearer and

consistent guidance for all study programs in implementing RPL. In addition, investment in developing the capacity of the RPL organizing team and developing a robust quality assurance system is a top priority to improve the quality and consistency of RPL implementation at PNB.

3.2 **Discussion**

The implementation of RPL at PNB reflects the complexity and challenges in integrating this concept into the vocational higher education system. An in-depth analysis of the research findings revealed several critical areas that require attention and improvement as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Critical Analysis of RPL implementation in PNB

Aspect	Current Condition	Standard/Expectation	Gap	Recommendation
RPL policy	Variations between study programs	Integrated policy	Inconsistent implementation	Development of institutional RPL policy
Assessment process	Diverse, non-standardized	Standardized evidence-based assessment	Potential unfairness	Standardization of assessment process
RPL team capacity	No specific training	Trained and competent team	Inconsistent assessment quality	Comprehensive training program
Quality assurance	Weak, no appeal mechanism	Integrated QA system	RPL program credibility	Development of RPL-specific IQAS
MBKM integration	Partial (3 out of 6 study programs)	Full integration	Misalignment with national policy	Curriculum revision
Documentation	Non-standardized	Comprehensive documentation system	Accountability and transparency	Development of RPL document management system

Implementation of RPL at PNB presents some critical challenges that require systematic attention and improvement. In-depth analysis reveals that variations in RPL implementation between study programs reflect the absence of integrated policies at the institutional level. As emphasized by Rifandi (2021), the need for a comprehensive RPL policy is very urgent to ensure consistency and fairness in program implementation.

The RPL assessment process shows worrying diversity, with several study programs still relying on the same course nomenclature without in-depth analysis. This practice is contrary to the principles of valid and reliable assessment as outlined by the Department of Education Training Western Australia (2008). Standardization of the assessment process, with an emphasis on Semester Learning Plan (RPS) analysis and portfolio evidence, is a priority to increase the validity of competency recognition.

The capacity of the RPL organizing team emerged as a critical area requiring immediate attention. The absence of special training for teams in all study programs is a significant weakness that can compromise the quality of RPL implementation. In line with Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2001), developing team capacity through comprehensive training programs is a crucial step to ensure consistency in RPL implementation.

The quality assurance aspect of RPL at PNB shows worrying weaknesses, especially with the absence of an appeals mechanism in the majority of study programs. This is contrary to the principles of accountability and transparency emphasized in Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 53 of (2023). The development of an Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) specifically for RPL, including a clear appeal mechanism, is a priority to increase the credibility of the program (Arifudin, 2019).

The partial integration of the MBKM program in RPL reflects the challenges in aligning RPL with current national education policies. A revision of the RPL curriculum that fully integrates MBKM is needed to ensure the program's relevance to the direction of national higher education. The absence of a standardized documentation system has the potential to reduce the accountability and transparency of the RPL program. Developing a comprehensive RPL document management system is important to support effective assessment, evaluation, and reporting processes.

These findings confirm that although PNB has demonstrated commitment to RPL implementation, there is still a significant gap between current practices and the ideal standard of RPL implementation. This is in line with the observations of Aungles et al., (2000), regarding the complexities of integrating RPL into established higher education systems.

To overcome these challenges, PNB needs to adopt a holistic approach to RPL program development. Key steps include developing a comprehensive institutional RPL policy, standardizing the assessment process, investing in team capacity development, strengthening the quality assurance system, revising the curriculum to integrate MBKM, and implementing a standardized document management system. By adopting this approach, PNB has the potential to not only improve the quality and consistency of its RPL program but also become a reference model for RPL implementation at other vocational higher education institutions in Indonesia. This effort is in line with the vision of RPL as a key instrument in supporting lifelong learning and improving workforce qualifications, as emphasized by the Australian National Training Authority, (2000).

In conclusion, RPL implementation at PNB is at a critical point where systematic and comprehensive improvements are needed to ensure the program can fulfill its potential in increasing the accessibility and relevance of vocational higher education. With improvements that are in line with national standards and industry needs, the RPL program at PNB can be a catalyst in the transformation of vocational higher education in Indonesia, supporting the development of adaptive and competitive human resources in the global era.

The implementation of RPL program at PNB reflects a complex transformative journey in Indonesia's vocational higher education landscape. This research reveals that although PNB has demonstrated a strong commitment to adopting RPL, this journey is still characterized by various challenges and opportunities that require serious attention.

The main findings show significant variations in RPL implementation between study programs, indicating the need for a more integrated policy framework at the institutional level. Even though the legal basis for implementing RPL has been fulfilled, there are still gaps in crucial aspects such as standardization of the assessment process, capacity building of the organizing team, and a comprehensive quality assurance system.

The RPL assessment process, which is the heart of this program, still shows inconsistencies that have the potential to compromise the validity and reliability of competency recognition. This is compounded by the lack of specific training for RPL orga-nizing teams, which is a significant weakness in ensuring the quality and consistency of program implementation. On the other hand, the adoption of hybrid learning methods in several study programs shows a positive adaptation to the flexibility needs of RPL students. However, the partial integration of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program in RPL illustrates the challenges in aligning the program with current national education initiatives.

Facing this complexity, PNB needs to take strategic steps to optimize RPL implementation. This includes developing a comprehensive RPL policy at the institutional level, standardizing the assessment process with an emphasis on in-depth analysis of the RPS and portfolio of evidence, as well as a major investment in developing the capacity of the RPL team. Furthermore, the development of an integrated RPL quality assurance system, including a clear appeal mechanism, is crucial to increasing the credibility of the program.

4 Conclusion

RPL implementation in PNB is at a critical point that requires systematic and comprehensive improvements. With improvements that are in line with national standards and industry needs, the RPL program at PNB has the potential to not only increase the accessibility and relevance of vocational higher education, but also become a reference model for other institutions in Indonesia.

This research highlights the importance of continuous evaluation and continuous improvement in RPL implementation. More than just a credit recognition program, RPL at PNB has the potential to be a catalyst in the transformation of vocational higher education, supporting the development of adaptive and competitive human resources in the global era. However, realizing this potential depends on the ability of institutions to overcome existing challenges and develop more systematic and evidence-based approaches. Finally, this research also highlights the need for further studies to measure the long-term impact of RPL on the quality of graduates and its relevance to industry needs. Thus, PNB's journey in implementing RPL is not only a reflection of the development of vocational higher education in Indonesia but also contributes to the global discourse on lifelong learning and recognition of competence in an era that is constantly changing.

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