

## **Management of Practical Courses in the EC Study Program: Challenges for Open University**

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This study aims to determine the management and implementation of courses practicing in Early Childhood Education Study Program. The evaluation was done using the "The Hierarchy of Policy Process" framework of Bromley (1989). The analysis is conducted on 3 levels of policy-making hierarchy, 1) the level of policy making itself, 2) the level of strategy formulation to implement the policy and 3) the operational level in implementing the policy. The approach used in this research is "Context, Input, Process, Product / CIPP" by looking at these four components in the implementation of tutorials in practicing subjects. The results of this study are 1). Policies related to the assignment of courses with practical assignments have been made at UT, contained in the UT Catalog to serve as reference for all related work units in the implementation of face-to-face tutorials. However, the UT Catalog has not been used as the main reference in the implementation of tutorials, either by tutors or students. 2). The formulation of strategies for conducting practicing course tutorials has been done by preparing tutorial support components in the Distance Learning Program Unit in the region. However, there is no synergy between the UT policy and the implementation strategy of practicing subjects in the field, 3). The tutor's perception of course tutorial process is very good practice, seen from learning strategy used in tutorial, 4). Students' perceptions of the course tutorial process are inadequate because the information contained in the UT Catalog is not fully understood 5). the implementation of tutorials for practice courses take place especially when the tutor on duty has a high commitment to help students learn.

*Keywords: practice courses, face-to-face tutorials, practical assignments, teachers Early Childhood education*

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the goals of Undergraduate Early Childhood (EC) Program Universitas Terbuka (UT/the Indonesia Open University) is that EC educators have the ability to manage educational development activities, which include planning and implementing development activities, assessing learning processes and learning outcomes and student development and improving development activities based on assessment results (UT Catalog, 2016).

In the EC Study Program, there are various courses with competencies in cognitive level 3, namely "application", meaning that students must apply and experience the competencies themselves. In its design, the course has been designed so that students experience practice for the application of concepts. For this reason, as many as 22 courses are designed as courses that are written with practical assignments in them. At present, there are 22 courses with practical assignments consisting of 9 practical courses involving students and 13 practice subjects that do not involve students.

From the observations made during the monitoring period of the Face-to-Face Tutorial in 2016.1 and 2016.2, information was obtained that the practice for practicing courses in EC in many UPBJJ that were monitored had not been implemented (UT Learning Center, 2016). The results of Marisa's study (2016) show that students think that they need better quality tutorials related to the provision of learning media, giving case examples and practicing concepts from the material being discussed. Likewise the opinion of face-to-face tutors who suggested that the EC courses be carried out in the tutorial practices. From the results of the discussion of UT Central lecturers with tutors at UPBJJ, it was found that the tutors also did not practice the subjects they were responsible for.

The data above shows that there is a possibility that students do not get the learning process outlined in the competencies of practicing subjects. Thus, there is a possibility that students do not reach the competencies in the course. From the above problems, the research problems can be formulated as follows: "How to manage and administer practicing courses in the EC Teacher Education Study Program". From the formulation of the problem above, the following are the questions in this study:

- a. What policies are related to the management and implementation of practical courses?
- b. What are the perceptions of tutors on the course tutorial process in practice?
- c. What are the perceptions and exptations of students about the course tutorial process in practice?
- d. What is the implementation of a tutorial for practice courses?

This study aims to determine the management and implementation of practicing courses in the EC Education Study Program. In more detail, this study aims to conduct an analysis of, a) Policies related to the management and implementation of practical courses, b). Tutor's perceptions of the course tutorial process practice, c). Students' perceptions and exptations of the course tutorial process practice, and d). Management and implementation of tutorials for practice courses.

## METHODOLOGY

This research is evaluation research that will look at the management and implementation of courses in practice. Based on the chosen approach, namely the approach *Context - Input - Process - Product (CIPP)*, this evaluation will look at the four levels in the management and implementation of practicing courses in the EC Teacher Education Study Program. The object that is the target of each type of evaluation in this study:

1. **Evaluation of Context (*context*)**. in this context, the implementation of course tutorials with courses in practice. The importance of tutorials on courses with the task of practicing is one of the efforts made by the Universitas Terbuka to improve the quality of its graduates .
2. **Evaluation of Inputs (*Input*)**, will see the readiness of the UT Center, Study Program and UPBJJ in managing and organizing course tutorials with practical assignments, which include strategies for implementing policies, procedures, fees and schedules that have been set in conducting course tutorials with practical assignments.
3. **The evaluation of the process (*Process*)**, to analyze the potential for inconsistency in the implementation of tutorial courses with practical assignments to be anticipated before the program is implemented. The evaluation of the process will also see and rord/rord the implementation of activities and activities in the tutorial with practical courses.
4. **Product Evaluation (*Product*)**, carried out with the aim of seeing the achievement of student learning outcomes in course tutorials with practical assignments, including seeing the results of learning in face-to-face tutorials. The research samples are UT leaders, students, tutors and supporting documents related to conducting face-to-face tutorials in practicing courses.

Data was collected through analysis of various policy documents related to practice subjects and secondary data analysis from the Academic and Student Administration Bureau, and data from UPBJJ. In addition, data collition was also conducted through face-to-face meetings with all net respondents (students, tutors, UT Central lecturers, and UPBJJ and Learning Aid and Learning Materials Services Coordinators at UPBJJ). The instrument used was a questionnaire for tutors and students and interview guidelines.

The research was conducted from April to November 2017. The research locations were at 4 UPBJJ namely Purwokerto, Bandung, Bogor, Samarinda, Jakarta.

The research data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively for data on the number of practicing subjects, the number of students participating in the tutorial and the number of tutors, as well as the data on student learning outcomes in the 2016.1 and 2016 semester.2. Data from various documents (Guidelines/technical guidelines, will be analyzed qualitatively descriptive).

## CONCLUSION AND ROMMENDATIONS

This study it can be concluded the following points:

1. Policies related to the determination of courses with practical assignments have been carried out at UT Center, which is contained in the Universitas Terbuka Catalog to be a reference for all relevant work units in conducting face-to-face tutorials. However, the UT Catalog has not been used as the main reference in the implementation of the tutorial. Other findings indicate that UT Central's readiness in supporting the

implementation of learning for practicing courses is supported by the availability of Face-to-Face Tutorial Guidelines along with thnical instructions. Nevertheless, the guideline does not contain matters related to the explanation of the implementation of practicum/practicum courses.

2. The formulation of the strategy for holding tutorials on practicing courses has been done by preparing the supporting components of the tutorial in the Distance Learning Program Unit in the area. However, there is no synergy between UT's policies and strategies for implementing practice courses in the field.
3. The perception of tutors on the course tutorial process is very good practice, which can be seen from the learning strategies used in the tutorial.
4. Students' perceptions of the course tutorial process in practice are inadequate because the information contained in the UT Catalog is not read and understood.
5. The implementation of tutorials for courses practice especially if the assigned tutor has a high commitment to help students learn.

The rommendations given for the implementation of practicing courses are as follows:

1. Policies on practicing courses written in the UT Catalog should be more focused on academic aspts, namely the provision of information related to the curriculum of study programs and practice courses at the operational level, namely in the Study Orientation New Students (OSMB) and in the process of training and debriefing of tutors.
2. For this reason, guidance to students in OSMB needs to be supplemented with material about the curriculum of the study program and practice courses and strategies for applying them in the tutorial.
3. Debriefing to the tutor needs to be supplemented with material about the study program curriculum and practice courses and strategies for applying them in the tutorial.
4. A complete study needs to be carried out related to the learning system for practicing courses that have not yet matched the implementation in face-to-face teaching materials and tutorials so that they are in accordance with the principles of the instructional system.

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