

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the PKBM (Community Learning Activity Center) Program in Package C Equivalent to High School in Improving Student Competence in Wajo Regency

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the Package C program implementation in Community Learning Centers (PKBM) in improving student competence in Wajo Regency, Indonesia. The background of this research arises from the issue of limited access to formal education for productive-age citizens who cannot continue to senior secondary school. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, involving informants consisting of PKBM administrators, tutors, and Package C learners. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that the implementation of the Package C program in Wajo's PKBM is effective in enhancing learners' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies. The effectiveness is influenced by institutional management, tutor competence, life-skill-oriented curriculum, and community support. However, challenges remain, including limited learning facilities, low motivation among some learners, and minimal use of digital learning technology. These findings emphasize the importance of strengthening PKBM governance and improving tutor professionalism to ensure the sustainability and quality of non-formal education in rural contexts.

Keywords: Community Learning Center, Non-Formal Education, Package C, Students Competence

A. Introduction

Globally, education is recognized as a fundamental human right that serves as the foundation for sustainable development and improving the quality of life for communities. International organizations like UNESCO emphasize the importance of lifelong learning, which involves formal, informal, and non-formal education as a strategy for achieving a knowledge-based society (Lokollo, Siang, and Dahlan 2020). In various developing countries, Community Learning Centers (CLCs) serve as an important platform for communities to access education outside the formal school system. This institution functions to expand learning opportunities, improve life

skills, and encourage community participation in social and economic development (Komar, Sukmana, and Setiawan 2025; Mutakim et al. 2024).

The global education paradigm, which emphasizes equal access and quality, has led to the emergence of non-formal education policies in various countries, including Indonesia (Hasanah et al. 2021). PKBM (*Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat*), as a form of Community Learning Center, plays a role in facilitating the learning needs of communities not reached by the formal school system (Abidin, Tobibatussa'adah, and Mujib 2022). Research by (Komar, Sukmana, and Setiawan 2025) confirms that PKBM serves as a strategic means of developing individual competencies thru a community-based approach, aiming to create broader independence, well-being, and social participation.

Nationally, Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states that non-formal education is an educational pathway that functions as a substitute, supplement, and complement to formal education in supporting lifelong learning. One form of non-formal education is the equivalency program, which consists of Package A (equivalent to elementary school), Package B (equivalent to junior high school), and Package C (equivalent to senior high school/vocational high school) (Suryadi, Subaryanto, and Arif 2023). Fuadi et al. (2021) explain that the Package C program in Indonesia makes a significant contribution to addressing educational inequality and providing opportunities for the community to obtain a high school equivalent diploma thru a flexible and contextual learning system.

In this context, the existence of Community Learning Centers (PKBM) becomes a strategic solution to expand access to education for communities not reached by formal channels (Dian et al. 2024). PKBM is a non-formal education unit that grows from, by, and for the community to meet lifelong learning needs and improve the quality of life for citizens socially and economically (Azzasyofia 2020). Thru equality programs like Package C, PKBM serves as a means of educational equity and a platform for community empowerment.

Package C is not only oriented toward academic achievement, but is also aimed at improving students' competence in aspects of knowledge, skills, and work attitudes relevant to community needs (Kardoyo et al. 2021). According to research results at PKBM Bhina Swakarya, the quality of Package C implementation includes four main components: the quality of institutional management, the quality of the learning process, the quality of students, and the support of the family and social environment (Fuadi et al. 2021). These components serve as the main benchmarks for evaluating the effectiveness of non-formal education programs.

In Indonesia, the challenges of organizing PKBM still include limited human resources, a lack of learning facilities, and weak institutional governance. (Pamungkas

2019) emphasizes that the success of PKBM in achieving its goals is highly dependent on the effectiveness of resource management, leadership, and accountable financial management (Pamungkas 2019). Therefore, increasing the capacity of managers and tutors is key to ensuring the sustainability and quality of educational services at PKBM.

The study by Rusli Abdillah et al. (2018) also revealed the importance of implementing accreditation-based management standards in PKBM to ensure the quality of non-formal education services (Abdillah, Wahyudi, and Sukmawati 2018). Accreditation serves as an instrument to ensure that program planning, implementation, and evaluation activities meet National Education Standards (SNP). However, the research shows that many PKBMs in Indonesia are not yet optimally accredited, so the effectiveness of their programs needs to be comprehensively evaluated.

The research by Mutakim et al. (2024) shows that the responsiveness of PKBM (Community Learning Centers) to the learning needs of the community in Indonesia is considered good, especially in terms of sustainable planning and program relevance. However, there are still weaknesses in providing creative space for students and utilizing the potential of the environment as a learning resource (Mutakim et al. 2024). This illustrates that the effectiveness of PKBM is highly dependent on the institution's ability to adapt the curriculum and teaching methods to the local characteristics of the community.

Beside academic aspects, the integration of character values such as independence, responsibility, and work ethic is an important part of equitable education. Research (Irnawati et al. 2024) confirms that character education in PKBM can shape learners with good morals and excellent personalities thru the habituation of positive activities and the practice of life skills. This aligns with the research findings (Amelia, Sudrajat, and Yuliaty 2025) which show that life skills-based entrepreneurship training at PKBM is able to improve the independence and economic capabilities of learners.

In the local context, Wajo Regency in South Sulawesi Province has diverse socio-economic characteristics, with a portion of the population working in the agricultural and service sectors. Although high school participation rates show an increase, there are still productive age groups who have not completed formal education. The presence of PKBM in Wajo plays an important role as an alternative educational platform, especially thru the Paket C program, which provides opportunities for residents to continue their education equivalent to high school. This program is expected to improve the competence of learners in both academic aspects and practical skills that support improving their standard of living (Samalo, Sumual, and Monigir 2025).

Based on the description, research on the effectiveness of the PKBM program for Package C (equivalent to high school) in improving student competence in Wajo Regency becomes very important. This evaluation serves not only to assess the extent to which the program has achieved its learning objectives, but also to identify the inhibiting and supporting factors in the program's implementation. The results of this research are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of non-formal education studies, as well as a practical contribution to local governments and PKBM managers in designing strategies to improve the quality of community-based education services in Wajo Regency.

Non-formal education serves as a complement and substitute for formal education, as stipulated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. PKBM serves as a platform for implementing equality programs, including Packages A, B, and C. According to (Abdillah, Wahyudi, and Sukmawati 2018), effective management of PKBM must meet national education accreditation standards, including program planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting.

Mutakim et al. (2024) found that the responsiveness of PKBM (Community Learning Centers) to the learning needs of the community in Indonesia is considered good, especially in terms of planning and sustainable development. However, improvements are still needed in aspects of student creativity and the utilization of local environmental potential as a learning resource (Komar, Sukmana, and Setiawan 2025) also emphasize that participatory institutional governance plays an important role in increasing the effectiveness of learning and student competence in PKBM. Additionally, (Fuadi et al. 2021) explains that the quality of the Package C program is measured thru four main components: the quality of institutional management, the learning process, the quality of students, and family and social environment support. Thus, the effectiveness of PKBM is not only determined by the teaching and learning process, but also by the synergy between actors in supporting the achievement of equality education goals

B. Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of deeply and contextually understanding the effectiveness of the PKBM Package C program. The research location was determined at three active PKBMs in Wajo Regency, which were purposively selected based on accreditation, the number of students, and institutional support.

Data collection techniques include:

- a. In-depth interviews with PKBM managers, tutors, and students;
- b. Direct observation of learning activities and institutional management;
- c. Document study of activity reports, curriculum, and learning evaluation results.

Data analysis is conducted through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity is strengthened using source and method triangulation. The effectiveness indicators used refer to the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation framework, with a focus on the program's alignment with community needs, the quality of the learning process, learning outcome competencies, and the program's social impact.

C. Results and Discussion

Based on data from DaftarSekolah.net, there are 13 PKBM institutions recorded in Wajo Regency, spread across various sub-districts. All of these institutions are privately owned, with 3 (23.08%) having B accreditation and the rest not yet accredited (76.92%). Distribution by district includes: Tempe (2), Pammana (2), Tanasitolo (2), and one institution each in Keera, Sajo Anging, Bola, Pitumpanua, Maniang Pajo, Majauleng, and Takkalala districts. This finding suggests that the service space for the Package C program through PKBM in the region is small-scale and dispersed, with specific challenges related to accreditation and facilities. In the context of this research, the three PKBMs selected as study locations (PKBM Harapan Bangsa, PKBM Cendekia Mandiri, PKBM Sipatokkong) were chosen because they are representative of the distribution pattern in Wajo Regency and represent the characteristics of the community served.

As one of the regions with diverse social and geographical characteristics, Wajo Regency still needs to improve its formal education participation rate. In this context, Community Learning Centers (PKBM) play an important role as non-formal education providers, offering alternative learning access to the community, especially for those who did not have the opportunity to pursue formal education. PKBM serves as a community-based learning platform that emphasizes the principles of equality, empowerment, and lifelong learning.

In line with the equal education policy outlined in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and supported by the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 81 of 2013 concerning the Establishment, Closure, and Operation of PKBM, this institution is expected to be at the forefront of equitable education at the regional level. In Wajo Regency, the existence of PKBM (Community Learning Centers) is a strategic solution to address the low high school graduation rates among the productive age population.

In 2025, it was recorded that Wajo Regency had a number of PKBM institutions actively running Paket A, B, and especially Paket C programs equivalent to high school. The distribution of these institutions indicates a real effort by local governments and communities to expand access to non-formal education in various sub-district areas. Nevertheless, the accreditation levels between institutions still vary;

some have been well-accredited, while others are still in the coaching and evaluation stage.

To provide a clearer picture of the distribution and condition of PKBM institutions in Wajo Regency, Table 1 is presented below, containing a list of PKBM names along with their kecamatan locations and accreditation status based on 2025 field data.

Table 1. List of PKBM in Wajo Regency, South Sulawesi (2025)

No	Sub-district	Name PKBM	Accreditation
1	Tanasitolo	Hati Mulia	A
		Sadar	B
2	Tempe	Yasiwajo	B
3	Pammana	—	—
4	Sabbangparu	—	—
5	Pitumpanua	Kartika	B
6	Keera	Khaerunnisa	B
7	Penrang	—	—
8	Belawa	—	—
9	Sabbangparu	—	—
10	Majauleng	Mandiri	B
11	Sajoanging	Kuncup Bahagia	B
12	Bola	Latenritappu	B
13	Takkalala	Merpati Putih	B
14	Maniangpajo	Berinnyi Jaya	B

Source: Researcher's field data notes (2025), adjusted to the list from DaftarSekolah.net.

Based on the results of field data collection and documentation from DaftarSekolah.net, as well as verification of institutional records, it is known that in 2025 there are 14 Community Learning Centers (PKBM) active in Wajo Regency, South Sulawesi. The fourteen institutions are spread across various sub-districts, namely Tanasitolo, Tempe, Pammana, Sabbangparu, Pitumpanua, Keera, Penrang, Belawa, Majauleng, Sajoanging, Bola, Takkalala, and Maniangpajo. Of that number, the majority of PKBM are private and serve as the main providers of Paket A, B, and especially Paket C (equivalent to high school) equivalency education programs. Institutionally, the data shows that eight PKBM have B accreditation, one institution has A accreditation, and the other five institutions do not yet have official accreditation status. Institutions accredited A and B, such as PKBM Hati Mulia and Sadar in Tanasitolo District, Yasiwajo in Tempe District, Kartika in Pitumpanua, Khaerunnisa in Keera, Mandiri in Majauleng, Kuncup Bahagia in Sajoanging, Latenritappu in Bola, Merpati Putih in Takkalala, and Berinnyi Jaya in Maniangpajo, show relatively good performance in learning management, tutor involvement, and student competency achievement.

Meanwhile, some PKBMs, such as those in the Pammana, Penrang, Belawa, and Sabbangparu areas, still face obstacles in program implementation. Limited

infrastructure, a shortage of certified tutors, and low participation from learners are challenges that affect the effectiveness of the Package C program in the area. This condition aligns with the results of previous discussions that the differences in quality among PKBMs are highly influenced by accreditation factors and institutional capacity.

From a geographical distribution perspective, the presence of PKBM in Wajo Regency indicates that non-formal education services have reached most administrative areas, including rural areas. This reflects the local government's commitment to supporting equal access to education for communities not reached by the formal education system. In addition, some well-accredited PKBMs, such as Mandiri, Merpati Putih, and Kuncup Bahagia, are also innovating thru skills-based training (life skills training) such as entrepreneurship, agricultural product processing, and basic digital skills.

Thus, it can be generally concluded that the performance of PKBM in Wajo Regency is quite effective in implementing the literacy program, although there are still gaps between institutions. PKBMs with good accreditation have proven to be more capable of improving the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies of learners, while institutions that are not yet accredited need further guidance and support from local governments to be able to meet the expected quality standards of non-formal education.

Increased Competency of Learners

The results of the phenomenological study revealed that the effectiveness of the Package C program in Wajo Regency is reflected in three main dimensions: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, with the addition of the social-community dimension as a shaper of learners' learning meaning.

1. Cognitive Dimension Learners demonstrated improved understanding of general and contextual subjects. The tutor uses a contextual learning strategy by linking the material to everyday life, such as calculating work, household financial literacy, and the use of simple technology for communication. This finding aligns with (Fuadi et al. 2021), which states that local context-based learning is effective in improving learning outcomes and concept retention. However, the biggest challenges arise in PKBMs that are not yet accredited, where not all tutors have formal educational backgrounds and learning resources are still limited. Therefore, improving cognitive competence in rural areas needs to be supported by tutor training and the provision of digital modules.
2. Affective Dimension and Social Character PKBM in Wajo Regency plays an important role in shaping the social character of learners. The learning is designed to instill the values of discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. The

tutor also emphasized the importance of work ethic and self-confidence for adult learners. Research (Irnawati et al. 2024) supports this finding, showing that character-based equality education can foster learning motivation and social activity. Observation results show that learners at accredited PKBMs are more actively involved in social activities and group discussions compared to participants at non-accredited institutions. This indicates a correlation between the quality of institutions and the character development of students.

3. **Psychomotor Dimensions and Life Skills** Life skills training is a flagship aspect at several PKBMs, particularly at PKBM Cendekia Mandiri and Harapan Bangsa. Learners are trained to create local products (chips, traditional cakes, organic fertilizer) and market them thru social media. This activity has been proven to increase their independence and practical skills. As stated by (Amelia, Sudrajat, and Yuliaty 2025), life skills-based education can shift learners' mindsets from beneficiaries to productive economic actors. However, most PKBMs in Wajo do not yet have adequate training facilities. Out of 13 institutions, only 3 have basic skills equipment. This highlights the need for policy intervention and collaboration between the Education Office, the Manpower Office, and the private sector to strengthen the training component in PKBMs.

Factors Determining Program Effectiveness

The research identified four main factors influencing the effectiveness of the Package C program in Wajo Regency:

1. **The management and governance of institutions, namely PKBM, which have a structured planning, monitoring, and evaluation system, tend to be more effective.** According to (Komar, Sukmana, and Setiawan 2025), professional and participatory management enhances the institution's credibility and public trust.
2. **Tutor Competency:** The tutor is the key player in determining the success of learning. Tutors who are able to apply an andragogical approach and integrate simple technology have proven to be more successful in motivating adult learners. This aligns with the finding (Fuadi et al. 2021) that innovative tutors can adapt teaching methods to the characteristics of adult learners.
3. **Social and Family Support:** The success of the program is highly influenced by the involvement of parents, community leaders, and the social environment. PKBMs that actively partner with the local community show higher participation rates among learners.
4. **Facilities, Infrastructure, and Technology:** Limited facilities are the most dominant obstacle in most PKBMs in Wajo. Out of the 13 recorded institutions, only three have basic computer labs. The lack of digital facilities means online learning is not yet running optimally. In line with (Suryadi, Subaryanto, and Arif 2023), infrastructure barriers are a common challenge in the transformation of non-formal education in the regions.

Overall, the research findings indicate that the effectiveness of the Package C program at PKBM Wajo Regency has met the success criteria across three main dimensions: improved learning outcomes, character development, and strengthening life skills. This finding supports the theory of the mutual reinforcement model of nonformal education proposed by Rogers (2018), which states that nonformal education oriented toward community participation will result in behavioral changes and self-capacity building. The context of Wajo Regency shows that PKBM is not just a substitute for formal schools, but also an instrument for social empowerment. Thru community-based learning activities and entrepreneurship training, PKBM helps out-of-school citizens gain a new social identity as "lifelong learners."

However, inter-institutional disparities necessitate affirmative policies from local governments, particularly in the areas of accreditation, tutor training, and support for learning facilities. Local governments need to strengthen the coordinating function of the Non-Formal Education Department and involve the local business community to support the funding of life skills programs at PKBM. Additionally, it's important for PKBM in Wajo to start utilizing digital technology such as a simple Learning Management System (LMS) to make the learning process more efficient and documented. Digitalization not only improves administrative effectiveness but also expands the reach of education for learners in remote areas.

Conceptually, these results also strengthen the position of non-formal education within Indonesia's national education system, as stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003, namely as an equal, complementary, and community empowerment-oriented educational pathway. Thus, PKBM in Wajo Regency can serve as a model for effective community-based education practices in South Sulawesi.

D. Conclusions

Package C at the Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM) in Wajo Regency is effective in improving the competencies of learners in three main domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. In the cognitive aspect, learners showed improved logical thinking, literacy, and numeracy skills thru a contextual learning approach relevant to local needs. In the affective aspect, the equality education successfully fostered self-confidence, responsibility, and independent learning. Meanwhile, in the psychomotor aspect, life skills-based training activities were able to strengthen learners' practical abilities, especially in entrepreneurship and agricultural product processing. Nevertheless, the program's effectiveness still faces several constraints, such as limited facilities, low accreditation levels for some institutions, and variations in tutor competence across PKBMs. The most influential factors affecting learning effectiveness include institutional management, tutor quality, social support, and the availability of technological facilities. Based on these results, strategic policies from local governments are needed to strengthen the role of PKBM as a sustainable

community education center. This can be achieved thru improved tutor training, institutional incentives, tiered accreditation programs, and the integration of digital learning systems so that equality education services in Wajo Regency can reach the community more widely, effectively, and inclusively.

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