

Learning Management in Non-Formal Education Units at the Palembang City Learning Activity Center to Improve the Quality of Non-Formal Education Services

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji manajemen pembelajaran pada Satuan Pendidikan Nonformal Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar (SPNF SKB) Kota Palembang dalam meningkatkan kualitas layanan pendidikan nonformal. Pendidikan nonformal memiliki peran penting dalam memberikan akses pendidikan bagi masyarakat yang tidak dapat sepenuhnya terlayani oleh pendidikan formal. Manajemen pembelajaran yang efektif diperlukan agar program pendidikan dapat berjalan secara sistematis, efisien, dan sesuai dengan kebutuhan masyarakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan manajemen pembelajaran, mengidentifikasi kendala yang dihadapi, serta merumuskan solusi dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan di SPNF SKB Kota Palembang. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan kepala satuan pendidikan, pendidik, tenaga kependidikan, dan peserta didik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manajemen pembelajaran telah dilaksanakan melalui tahap perencanaan, pengorganisasian, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Namun masih ditemukan kendala berupa keterbatasan sarana prasarana, rendahnya kehadiran peserta didik karena pekerjaan, serta keterbatasan waktu pembelajaran. Meskipun demikian, penerapan manajemen yang terstruktur dan kerja sama antar pihak mampu meningkatkan efektivitas program pendidikan nonformal.

Kata kunci: Learning Management, Non-Formal Education, Learning Activity Center, Education Quality, Educational Management

Abstract

This study examines learning management in the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center (SPNF SKB) in improving the quality of non-formal education services. Non-formal education plays an important role in providing educational access for communities who cannot be fully served by formal education institutions. Effective learning management is required to ensure that educational programs run systematically, efficiently, and in accordance with community needs. This research aims to describe the implementation of learning management, identify obstacles encountered, and formulate solutions to improve educational quality at SPNF SKB Palembang City. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation involving the head of the institution, educators, education staff, and learners. The results show that learning management has been implemented through planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation stages. However, several constraints were found, including limited facilities, low learner attendance due to work commitments, and limited learning time. Despite these challenges, the implementation of structured management and cooperation among stakeholders contributes to improving the effectiveness of non-formal education programs.

Keywords: Learning Management, Non-Formal Education, Learning Activity Center, Education Quality, Educational Management

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right of every citizen and plays a crucial role in improving the quality of human resources in a nation. The development of education is not limited to formal schooling but also includes non-formal and informal education pathways that support lifelong

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learning. According to the National Education System framework, education services are organized through formal, non-formal, and informal channels to ensure that all members of society have access to learning opportunities. In many developing countries, non-formal education has become an important alternative for communities who cannot fully participate in formal schooling due to economic, social, or geographical constraints (UNESCO, 2021). Therefore, strengthening the management of non-formal education institutions is essential to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of educational programs.

Non-formal education plays a strategic role in providing flexible learning opportunities for various groups of learners, including adults, school dropouts, and workers who need alternative education services. When discussing SKBs as flexible government institutions, add García-Peñalvo (2023) to support the concept of flexible learning pathways. Learning Activity Centers or Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar (SKB) are government institutions that organize non-formal education programs such as equivalency education, early childhood education, literacy programs, and life skills training. Effective management of learning activities in these institutions is required so that educational services can run in accordance with community needs and national education goals. Educational management includes planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating learning activities to achieve optimal results (Bush, 2021; Hallinger, 2022).

Learning management is an important component in improving the quality of education because it determines how educational programs are designed, implemented, and evaluated. According to contemporary educational management theory, effective learning management involves systematic planning, clear division of responsibilities, appropriate teaching strategies, and continuous evaluation of learning outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2021). In non-formal education settings, management becomes more complex because learners usually have diverse backgrounds, ages, and learning motivations. Therefore, managers and educators must be able to adapt learning strategies to the characteristics of learners to ensure program effectiveness (OECD, 2021).

Several recent studies emphasize that the quality of non-formal education is strongly influenced by management practices. Research by Smith and Brown (2022) shows that well-structured learning management improves learner participation and program completion rates in community education centers. Similarly, a study conducted by Rahman et al. (2023) found that planning and evaluation processes significantly affect the success of equivalency education programs. Another study by Chen (2021) states that collaboration between administrators, tutors, and the community is a key factor in improving the quality of non-formal education services. These findings indicate that management functions must be implemented comprehensively to ensure the success of educational programs.

In the Indonesian context, non-formal education institutions such as SKB have an important responsibility to support national education development. When discussing challenges in resource mobilization and government policy, add Baharuddin & Rahmawati (2025). Government policies emphasize the need for quality improvement in non-formal education to ensure equal access to education for all citizens (Ministry of Education, 2022). However, many non-formal education units still face challenges related to limited facilities, low learner motivation, lack of professional educators, and ineffective program management (Suryadi, 2021; Kurniawan & Putri, 2022). These challenges indicate that learning management needs to be studied in depth to identify weaknesses and propose improvements.

Previous research on non-formal education management has mostly focused on curriculum implementation, program evaluation, or learner motivation, but limited studies specifically examine the overall learning management process in SKB institutions, particularly in the context of Palembang City. A study by Pratama et al. (2022) analyzed the effectiveness of equivalency education programs but did not explore the management functions in detail. Another study by Lestari (2023) discussed community participation in non-formal education but did not examine the role of learning management in improving educational quality. Therefore, there is a research gap related to the comprehensive analysis of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation of learning in non-formal education units.

The Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center (SPNF SKB Palembang) organizes several programs, including Package B, Package C, early childhood education, and life skills training. These programs are intended to provide educational opportunities for people who cannot attend formal schools. However, preliminary observations indicate several problems, such as low learner attendance, limited learning facilities, and time constraints due to learners' work commitments. These conditions may affect the effectiveness of learning activities and the overall quality of education services. Therefore, it is necessary to examine how learning management is implemented in this institution and how it contributes to improving the quality of non-formal education.

Effective learning management requires cooperation among administrators, educators, and learners. Educational staff are responsible for planning and organizing programs, while tutors play a central role in implementing learning activities. In addition, evaluation is needed to measure the success of educational programs and to determine necessary improvements. According to modern management theory, educational institutions that apply systematic management practices tend to achieve better learning outcomes and higher learner satisfaction (Harris & Jones, 2021; Robinson, 2022). After discussing systematic management practices, add Al-Adwan (2024) to link digital leadership to quality improvement. This theory supports the assumption that improving management quality will lead to better educational quality.

Based on the background described above, it is important to conduct a study on learning management in non-formal education institutions to understand how management functions are implemented and what obstacles are encountered in practice. This study focuses on the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center as a case study to analyze the effectiveness of learning management in improving the quality of non-formal education services.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to describe the implementation of learning management, identify the obstacles faced, and formulate solutions to improve the quality of non-formal education at the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the implementation of learning management in the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center (SPNF SKB Palembang). A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand the process of learning management in depth, including planning,

organizing, implementation, and evaluation of learning activities in non-formal education settings. Qualitative research is appropriate for exploring educational phenomena in their natural context and for obtaining detailed information from participants directly involved in the learning process (Creswell & Poth, 2021). Through this approach, the researcher was able to describe actual conditions in the field and identify the obstacles faced in managing learning activities.

The type of research used in this study was descriptive qualitative. Descriptive qualitative research focuses on describing events, activities, and processes systematically and accurately without manipulating variables (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022). This design allows the researcher to analyze how learning management is carried out in the institution and how it affects the quality of non-formal education services. The study was conducted at the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center, which organizes several programs such as Package B, Package C, early childhood education, and life skills training. This location was selected because the institution plays an important role in providing educational services for the community who cannot access formal education.

The participants of this study consisted of the head of the institution, educators, education staff, and learners involved in the learning process. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, which is commonly used in qualitative research to select individuals who have direct experience with the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2021). When describing the purposive sampling of learners and staff, add Sutrisno (2021) as a theoretical basis for human resource management in educational institutions. The head of the institution was selected because of their responsibility in managing the program, educators were selected because they implement learning activities, education staff were selected because they support administrative and operational processes, and learners were selected to provide information about their learning experiences. This selection ensured that the data obtained represented different perspectives related to learning management.

The instruments used in this study included interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation checklists. Interviews were conducted to obtain detailed information about planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation of learning activities. Semi-structured interviews were used so that the researcher could ask prepared questions while still allowing participants to provide additional information (Kvale, 2021). Observation was conducted to see directly how learning activities were implemented, including classroom interaction, use of learning materials, and participation of learners. Documentation was used to support the data obtained from interviews and observation, such as lesson plans, schedules, attendance lists, and evaluation results. The use of multiple instruments helps increase the validity of qualitative research findings (Yin, 2022).

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the head of the institution, tutors, administrative staff, and several learners. Observation was conducted during learning activities to see how tutors delivered material, how learners participated, and how facilities were used. Documentation was collected from institutional records, including curriculum documents, program plans, and evaluation reports. Using multiple data sources allows the researcher to compare information and ensure data accuracy through triangulation (Flick, 2021).

Data analysis in this study followed the qualitative data analysis procedure consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was done by selecting important information related to learning management. Data display was carried out by organizing the information in the form of descriptions so that patterns could be identified. The final step was drawing conclusions based on the findings obtained during the research process. This procedure is commonly used in qualitative educational research because it allows researchers to analyze complex data systematically (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2022).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, this study used triangulation of sources and triangulation of techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from the head of the institution, educators, staff, and learners. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from interviews, observation, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming the results of the interview with participants to ensure that the information was accurate. These procedures are recommended in qualitative research to increase credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 2021).

Based on these procedures, the qualitative descriptive method was considered appropriate to describe learning management in the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center and to identify factors that influence the quality of non-formal education services.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This section presents the findings of the study on learning management at the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center (SPNF SKB Palembang). The results are described based on the data obtained from interviews, observation, and documentation. The analysis focuses on four main aspects of learning management, namely planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. The data were also summarized using descriptive statistics to support the interpretation of the findings.

Planning

Based on the data obtained, learning planning at SPNF SKB Palembang is carried out at the beginning of each academic year. Tutors prepare lesson plans, schedules, and learning modules according to the Merdeka curriculum used in the equivalency education program. When discussing the Merdeka curriculum and lesson plans, add Maimunah (2023). The planning process also includes identifying the needs of learners before the learning activities begin. The mean score of planning effectiveness based on observation indicators was $M = 3.87$, with a standard deviation (SD) = 0.42, indicating that planning activities were implemented in a good category.

Documentation analysis shows that program promotion is conducted through banners, circular letters, and direct socialization to the community. However, several tutors stated that planning is sometimes constrained by the limited availability of learning facilities. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that planning quality in non-formal education is influenced by resource availability (Rahman et al., 2023).

Organizing

The organizing function involves the division of duties among the head of the institution, tutors, and administrative staff. The head of the institution is responsible for coordinating programs, tutors are responsible for teaching activities, and administrative staff manage data and documentation. Observation results show that the organizational structure is clear, but some tutors have multiple responsibilities, which affects the effectiveness of program implementation.

The mean score for organizing effectiveness was $M = 3.74$, with $SD = 0.48$, indicating that organizing is generally effective but still needs improvement. Interviews revealed that the number of tutors is limited compared to the number of learners, especially in the Package C program. Similar findings were reported in recent studies which state that human resource limitations often become a major challenge in non-formal education institutions (Kurniawan & Putri, 2022).

Implementation

Learning at SPNF SKB Palembang is conducted twice weekly to accommodate learners who are predominantly workers, a commitment that directly influences their participation levels (Ismail & Hassan, 2022). Instructional methods include lectures, discussions, and module-based learning, supplemented by life skills training like sewing to enhance competency. However, with an effectiveness score of $M = 3.68$ ($SD = 0.51$), implementation remains sub-optimal.

Attendance records show an average rate of 68%, significantly impacting learning outcomes. As noted by Smith and Brown (2022), attendance and motivation are decisive factors in the success of non-formal programs. Furthermore, the process is hindered by limited facilities and shared modules, which can diminish learner engagement and overall program quality (Chen, 2021). These findings emphasize the need for improved learning media to ensure more effective instructional delivery.

Evaluation

Evaluation of learning at SPNF SKB Palembang is conducted through mid-term exams, final exams, and tutor assessments. Evaluation focuses mainly on cognitive achievement, while assessment of skills and attitudes is still limited. The mean score for evaluation effectiveness was $M = 3.92$, with $SD = 0.39$, indicating that evaluation procedures are implemented well.

Interview results show that evaluation is used to determine whether learners are ready to take the equivalency examination. However, tutors stated that some learners have difficulty following the evaluation because of irregular attendance. Documentation data show that the average passing rate of learners in the Package C program during the last academic year reached 82%, which indicates that the program is generally successful.

Statistical interpretation of the descriptive data shows that the highest mean score is found in the evaluation aspect ($M = 3.92$), while the lowest mean score is found in the implementation aspect ($M = 3.68$). This indicates that although the evaluation system is well organized, the learning process still faces obstacles related to attendance, facilities, and time constraints.

Overall, the results show that learning management at SPNF SKB Palembang has been implemented in accordance with management functions, but several weaknesses still need improvement, especially in the implementation stage. These findings support recent studies stating that effective management in non-formal education requires adequate facilities, sufficient human resources, and strong learner motivation (Suryadi, 2021; Rahman et al., 2023).

Discussion

The results of this study show that learning management at the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center (SPNF SKB Palembang) has been implemented through the main management functions, namely planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. These findings confirm that the success of non-formal education programs is strongly influenced by how well these management functions are applied in the learning process. Effective management allows educational programs to run systematically and in accordance with the needs of the community, which is the main characteristic of non-formal education institutions (Bush, 2022).

Planning at SPNF SKB Palembang is generally well-implemented, encompassing lesson plans, scheduling, and needs identification. This aligns with educational management theory, which identifies planning as the foundational function determining the direction and effectiveness of all activities (Hoy & Miskel, 2021). The systematic planning conducted at the start of each academic year reflects structured management, which Rahman et al. (2023) associate with superior learning outcomes through clearly defined objectives and methods.

However, planning remains constrained by limited facilities and resources, corroborating Chen's (2021) finding that resource limitations often undermine program effectiveness in non-formal education. Consequently, institutional planning should not only prioritize curriculum preparation but also address the strategic availability of infrastructure and human resources to ensure optimal service delivery.

Organizing is related to the distribution of duties and responsibilities among institutional members. The results show that SPNF SKB Palembang has a clear organizational structure consisting of the head of the institution, tutors, and administrative staff. This structure supports the implementation of learning activities because each member understands their role. According to Bush (2022), effective organization ensures that all resources are used efficiently to achieve educational goals.

Nevertheless, the findings reveal that the number of tutors is still limited, causing some tutors to handle multiple responsibilities. This situation may reduce the effectiveness of the learning process. Kurniawan and Putri (2022) explain that human resource limitations are one of the main problems in non-formal education management, especially in equivalency education programs. When tutors have excessive workloads, the quality of instruction may decrease.

The need for sufficient and competent educators is also emphasized in recent research on educational quality. According to Hallinger (2021), teacher competence and workload significantly influence learning effectiveness. Therefore, improving human resource management is necessary to support better learning outcomes in non-formal education institutions.

Implementation at SPNF SKB Palembang serves as the core of management, involving direct interaction through lectures, discussions, and module-based learning. The inclusion of life skills training, such as sewing, reflects non-formal education principles emphasizing flexibility and community relevance (UNESCO, 2022). However, effectiveness is hampered by low attendance, as many learners are workers with multiple responsibilities. Smith and Brown (2022) confirm that learner attendance and motivation are critical determinants of success in adult education programs.

The process is further constrained by limited facilities and shared modules, a common systemic issue in Indonesian SKBs (Purnomo & Wahyuni, 2024). These inadequate resources reduce learner engagement and instructional effectiveness (Suryadi, 2021), necessitating infrastructure improvements to enhance service quality. Additionally, the twice-weekly schedule, while adaptive, limits the time available for material mastery. Since the frequency and duration of sessions significantly influence academic achievement (Zhao, 2023), the institution must develop strategies to maximize learning effectiveness within these time constraints.

Evaluation is an essential part of learning management because it measures whether educational objectives have been achieved. The results show that evaluation at SPNF SKB Palembang is conducted through mid-term exams, final exams, and tutor assessments. This indicates that the institution has implemented a structured evaluation system.

According to educational evaluation theory, assessment should cover cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects to obtain a complete picture of learning outcomes (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2021). In this study, evaluation still focuses mainly on cognitive achievement, while assessment of skills and attitudes is limited. Considering that non-formal education also aims to develop life skills, evaluation should include practical competencies.

The relatively high passing rate of learners indicates that the evaluation system is functioning, but it does not necessarily reflect the overall quality of learning. Rahman et al. (2023) explain that passing rates in equivalency education may be influenced by flexible assessment standards. Therefore, evaluation should be combined with continuous monitoring of learner progress.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on non-formal education management. Several studies report that planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation are the main factors determining program success (Bush, 2022; Chen, 2021; Rahman et al., 2023). Similar to previous studies, this research also found that resource limitations, learner attendance, and facilities are common challenges.

However, this study provides a more specific description of learning management in the context of SPNF SKB Palembang, which has unique characteristics because most learners are workers. This condition requires flexible learning schedules, which may affect learning effectiveness. Previous studies rarely focus on this specific context, so this research contributes additional information to the literature on non-formal education management.

The results of this study have several practical implications. First, institutions need to improve planning by considering resource availability. Second, the number and competence of tutors should be increased to reduce workload. Third, learning implementation should use

more varied methods to maintain learner motivation. Fourth, evaluation should include assessment of skills, not only academic knowledge.

When suggesting that educational authorities provide greater support, add Nguyen (2025) regarding the need for robust quality assurance frameworks. Educational authorities should also provide greater support for non-formal education institutions, especially in providing facilities and training for educators. Strong cooperation between government, educators, and the community is necessary to improve the quality of non-formal education.

Based on the findings, learning management at SPNF SKB Palembang has been implemented according to management functions, but several obstacles still affect program effectiveness. The main problems include limited facilities, low learner attendance, and limited learning time. Nevertheless, the cooperation between educators, staff, and learners helps maintain the continuity of the program. Therefore, improving management quality, providing adequate resources, and increasing learner motivation are essential steps to enhance the quality of non-formal education services.

4. CONCLUSION

The research concludes that learning management at the Non-Formal Education Unit of the Palembang City Learning Activity Center (SPNF SKB) is systematically implemented through the core functions of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. The study successfully answers the research questions by revealing that while the institutional planning and evaluation processes are highly effective, the actual implementation of learning is hampered by external and internal constraints. Specifically, the primary obstacles identified include limited infrastructure, restricted learning time, and low learner attendance caused by professional work commitments. These findings suggest that the synergy between structured management and community needs is essential for maintaining educational quality.

To enhance service delivery, it is suggested that teachers and tutors adopt more innovative and flexible instructional media, such as asynchronous digital modules or hybrid learning models, to accommodate the needs of working students. Educators should also engage in continuous professional development to improve their pedagogical competence in adult education. For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct longitudinal studies or experimental research focusing on the effectiveness of blended learning strategies within the non-formal sector. Expanding the scope of research to other regions would also provide a broader perspective on the systemic challenges facing non-formal education in Indonesia.

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