



IMPLEMENTATION OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING IN EQUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY AT PKBM SONGGO LANGIT

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Abstrak: Keterbatasan waktu belajar warga belajar Program Kesetaraan Paket C di PKBM Songgo Langit Kota Bengkulu karena mayoritas bekerja mendorong penerapan pembelajaran mandiri sebagai solusi untuk menyeimbangkan pekerjaan dan pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan penerapan pembelajaran mandiri yang meliputi perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Data dianalisis melalui reduksi, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan serta diuji keabsahannya dengan triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan dilakukan melalui penetapan tujuan, pemilihan materi, dan penyusunan modul mandiri sesuai kebutuhan warga belajar. Pelaksanaan berlangsung secara fleksibel melalui tugas berbasis modul, pendampingan tutor dengan pendekatan andragogi, serta komunikasi menggunakan media digital. Evaluasi dilakukan secara berkelanjutan melalui pemantauan proses belajar, penilaian tugas, dan post-test tiap akhir semester. Pembelajaran mandiri terbukti meningkatkan fleksibilitas, kemandirian, dan capaian belajar warga belajar. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa metode pembelajaran mandiri efektif diterapkan pada Program Kesetaraan Paket C karena mampu mengatasi keterbatasan waktu serta mendorong tanggung jawab belajar peserta didik.

Kata Kunci: pembelajaran mandiri, kesetaraan Paket C, PKBM, hasil belajar, evaluasi.

Abstract: Limited learning time for residents to study the Equality Education Program at PKBM Songgo Langit Bengkulu City because the majority of workers encourage the implementation of self directed learning as a solution to balance work and education. This study aims to describe the application of self directed learning which includes planning, implementation, and evaluation. The research uses a descriptive qualitative method with observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The data was analyzed through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing and tested for validity by triangulation. The results of the study show that planning is carried out through goal setting, material selection, and preparation of independent modules according to the needs of learning residents. The implementation takes place flexibly through module-based assignments, tutor assistance with an andragogy approach, and communication using digital media. Evaluation is carried out on an ongoing basis through monitoring the learning process, assignment assessment, and post-test at the end of each semester. Self directed learning has been proven to increase the flexibility, independence, and learning outcomes of learning residents. This study concludes that the self directed learning method is effectively applied to the Package C Equality Program because it is able to overcome time constraints and encourage students' learning responsibilities.

Keywords : self directed learning, equality education program, PKBM, learning outcomes, evaluation.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a strategic instrument in human development because it plays a role in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and character needed by individuals to actively participate in community life. Education not only functions as a process of knowledge transfer, but also as a means of humanizing human beings through the optimal development of students' potential (Sujana 2019). In line with this, Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System emphasizes that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential so that they have spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed for themselves, society, nation, and state.

In the national education system, education is organized through formal, non-formal, and informal channels. Formal education is a structured and tiered education path, while non-formal education is held outside the school system to serve the learning needs of the community that cannot be met through formal education. Informal education takes place in the family and community environment as part of the lifelong learning process (Rembangsupu, Budiman, and Rangkuti 2022). The existence of non-formal education is increasingly important in supporting *the lifelong learning* agenda and expanding access to education for people experiencing social, economic, and geographical barriers (UNESCO 2022).

According to Darlis (2017), non-formal education is an educational path outside of formal education that is organized in a structured and tiered manner to meet the learning needs of the community. Non-formal education is designed flexibly by considering the characteristics of students, environmental needs, learning time, and socio-economic conditions of the community. In its development, non-formal education not only functions as an alternative education, but also as an instrument of community empowerment and improvement of the quality of human resources (Rogers 2014). One form of non-formal education service that has a strategic role in expanding access to education is the Equality Education Program which is organized through the Center for Community Learning Activities (PKBM).

PKBM is a community-based educational institution formed from, by, and for the community with the aim of increasing the knowledge, skills, and independence of learning citizens. The existence of PKBM is expected to be able to become a center for community learning as well as a means of empowerment that supports the social and economic development of the local community (Gunawan et al. 2023). In addition to organizing Package A, Package B, and Package C equality education programs, PKBM also functions as a space for life skills development, community capacity building, and strengthening a lifelong learning culture.

One of the programs that is in great demand by the community is the Paket C or Equality Education Program which provides high school equivalent education services for community members who cannot complete formal education. However, the characteristics of residents studying Package C are generally different from students in formal education. Most learners are of productive age, have work, have family responsibilities, and face limited time to attend face-to-face learning regularly (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2015). This condition requires equality education providers to implement a more flexible and student-centered learning approach.

Various studies show that learning flexibility is an important factor in increasing the participation and learning success of adult learners. The *self-directed learning* approach is considered to be able to encourage students to manage their own learning process, determine learning needs, choose learning resources, and evaluate their learning outcomes independently (Merriam and Bierema 2014). From an andragogy perspective, self-paced learning is one of the main characteristics of adult learning because adult learners tend to have a need to control their own learning process and relate life experiences to the material learned (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2015).

PKBM Songgo Langit is one of the non-formal educational institutions in Bengkulu City that organizes the Package A, B, and C Equality Program for people who have dropped out of school. In addition to providing equality education services, PKBM Songgo Langit also develops various learning programs that are tailored to the needs of learning residents and the conditions

of the local community. Based on the results of initial observations, this institution is considered to be able to utilize various available resources to support the implementation of community education programs. However, in the implementation of the Package C Equality Program, an interesting condition was found to be studied further, namely the limitation of the intensity of face-to-face learning because most residents learn to work as traders, shopkeepers, and other informal sector workers.

This condition causes learning residents to often have difficulty participating in regular learning activities. On the other hand, tutors also face challenges in arranging learning schedules that are in accordance with the availability of learning time. To overcome these problems, PKBM Songgo Langit applies the self directed learning method as an alternative strategy so that learning residents can still complete equality education without having to leave their work activities. Self directed learning is carried out through the use of various learning resources, both print and digital, and supported by the guidance of tutors who act as learning facilitators (Putra, Kamil, and Pramudia 2017).

Although self directed learning has been widely discussed in the context of adult education and lifelong learning, empirical studies on the implementation of self directed learning in the Package C Equality Program in PKBM are still relatively limited, especially those that examine in depth the planning, implementation, and evaluation process in the context of productive age learners who are working. Most previous research has focused more on the effectiveness of equity programs or student learning outcomes, while aspects of the implementation of self directed learning as an adaptive strategy for learning time limitations have not been widely explored. Thus, this research has a contribution to enriching the study of non-formal education, especially related to the application of self directed learning to equality education for adult learners.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the self directed learning method in the Equality Education Program (Paket C) at PKBM Songgo Langit, Bengkulu City. The focus of the research is directed at the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating self directed learning applied to productive age learners who work, so as to provide an overview of learning practices that are adaptive to the needs of students in equality education.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand in depth the process of implementing the self directed learning method in the Package C Equality Program at the Songgo Langit Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM), Bengkulu City in a natural context. Through this approach, researchers can explore the experiences, perceptions, and practices carried out by managers, tutors, and learning residents in the implementation of self directed learning (Sugiyono 2020).

The research was carried out at PKBM Songgo Langit, Bengkulu City. The selection of the research location was based on the characteristics of institutions that apply self directed learning methods for residents studying the Package C Equality Program who are mostly of productive age and working while participating in equality education. This condition makes PKBM Songgo Langit a relevant location to study the implementation of self directed learning in non-formal education.

Table 1. Research Informant

No	Respondent	Quantity	Selection Criteria
1	PKBM Manager	1	Have a role in the planning, management, and evaluation of the Equities Education Program (Paket C)

No	Respondent	Quantity	Selection Criteria
2	Teacher of Equity Education Program	2	Terlibat langsung dalam pelaksanaan dan pendampingan pembelajaran mandiri
3	Students	2	Status as a learning citizen who works while participating in the Package C Equality Program and implementing independent learning
Total		5	Selected using <i>purposive sampling</i> techniques based on direct involvement in the implementation of self-learning

The research subjects were determined using *the purposive sampling technique*, which is the selection of informants based on certain considerations relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono 2020). The research informants consisted of one PKBM manager, two tutors from the Package C Equality Program, and two learning residents who worked while participating in the equality education program. The selection of informants is based on their direct involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of self directed learning at PKBM Songgo Langit.

Table 2. Research Focus and Indicators of Implementation of Independent Learning

Research Focus	Aspects Studied	Indicator
Self-directed Learning Planning	Preparation of learning activities	1. Preparation of learning objectives 2. Preparation of teaching materials 3. Determination of learning strategies 4. Selection of learning resources
Implementation of Self Directed Learning	The learning process of the students	1. Learning activities of residents to learn 2. The role of the tutor as a facilitator 3. Utilization of learning resources 4. Study time management
Self-Directed Learning Evaluation	Assessment of learning processes and outcomes	1. Monitoring the Progress of Learning 2. Assessment of learning outcomes 3. Providing feedback to students

The focus of the research is directed at three main aspects of the implementation of independent learning, namely: (1) self directed learning planning which includes the preparation of learning objectives, teaching materials, learning strategies, and learning resources; (2) the implementation of self directed learning which includes learning activities of learning residents, the role of tutors as facilitators, the use of learning resources, and the management of learning time; and (3) evaluation of self directed learning which includes monitoring learning progress, assessment of learning outcomes, and feedback given to learning residents. The indicators are compiled based on the concept of *Self-Directed Learning* which emphasizes the ability of students to identify learning needs, set learning goals, choose learning strategies and resources, and evaluate learning outcomes independently (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015; Merriam & Bierema, 2014).

Research data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to directly observe the self directed learning process, interaction between tutors and learning residents, and the use of learning resources used. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with interview guidelines developed based on the dimensions of *Self-Directed Learning*, including learning planning, learning independence, learning resource management, learning motivation, and evaluation of learning outcomes. Meanwhile, documentation is used to complete the research

data through the review of documents related to the implementation of the Package C Equality Program, such as learning modules, activity schedules, attendance lists, assessment notes, and other supporting documents.

Data analysis was carried out interactively by referring to the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) model which includes three stages, namely data *condensation*, data presentation (*data display*), and *conclusion drawing and verification*. Data condensation is carried out by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organizing data obtained from the field. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of narratives, matrix and thematic categorization to facilitate the interpretation process. The final stage is carried out through continuous conclusion withdrawal and verification until consistent and accountable findings are obtained.

To ensure the validity of the data (*trustworthiness*), this study applies source triangulation, technique triangulation, time triangulation, and *member checking*. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from managers, tutors, and learning residents. The triangulation technique was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. Time triangulation is done through collecting data at different times to test the consistency of the information obtained. In addition, *member checking* is carried out by reconfirming the results of interviews and interpreting data to research informants to ensure that the findings obtained are in accordance with their experiences and views. With this procedure, the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of research results can be improved.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research will be presented based on the steps of the Implementation of the Self directed learning Method in the Equality Education Program (Paket C) at the Songgo Langit Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM), Bengkulu City, which includes the planning, implementation and evaluation stages.

Planning Self directed learning Methods

The first stage is the planning stage. At this stage, PKBM Songgo Langit through tutors and managers prepares a learning plan that includes setting learning objectives, preparing materials, selecting learning methods or strategies, and setting time allocation. In general, learning objectives are adjusted to the characteristics and learning needs of students. The specific purpose of the implementation of self directed learning is to increase knowledge, expand insights, increase learning experiences, and build students' confidence. Through independent learning, students are expected to be able to learn independently so that their confidence increases and they can take responsibility for the learning process without depending on others. This is in line with the opinion of Uno (2011) who states that independence is a person's ability to direct and control the way they think and act, so that they do not have emotional dependence on others.

The results of the study show that the main reason for the application of the self directed learning method is to overcome the limited learning time experienced by learning residents. The diversity of ages, the location of residence, and the type of work of the residents are important factors that encourage the use of this method. The implementation of self directed learning at PKBM Songgo Langit aims to provide freedom as well as responsibility to learning residents in meeting their educational needs. Through this method, learning residents can adapt the learning process to earning a living activities so that they can learn anytime and anywhere.

The learning materials used at PKBM Songgo Langit are adjusted to the needs of the learning community and prepared to face the national exam equivalent to high school. The strategies implemented include the distribution of modules containing materials and practice questions by tutors and the use of *WhatsApp groups* as a communication medium to support the self directed learning process.

The findings show that self directed learning planning at PKBM Songgo Langit not only functions as an effort to adjust to the limited learning time of learning residents, but also as a form of adaptation of non-formal educational institutions to the characteristics of adult students who have responsibilities for work and social life. From the perspective of *Self-Directed Learning* (SDL), a planning process that provides flexibility of time and learning space is one of the important prerequisites for encouraging learners' learning independence (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015). This flexibility allows learners to determine when, where, and how they learn according to their individual needs and conditions.

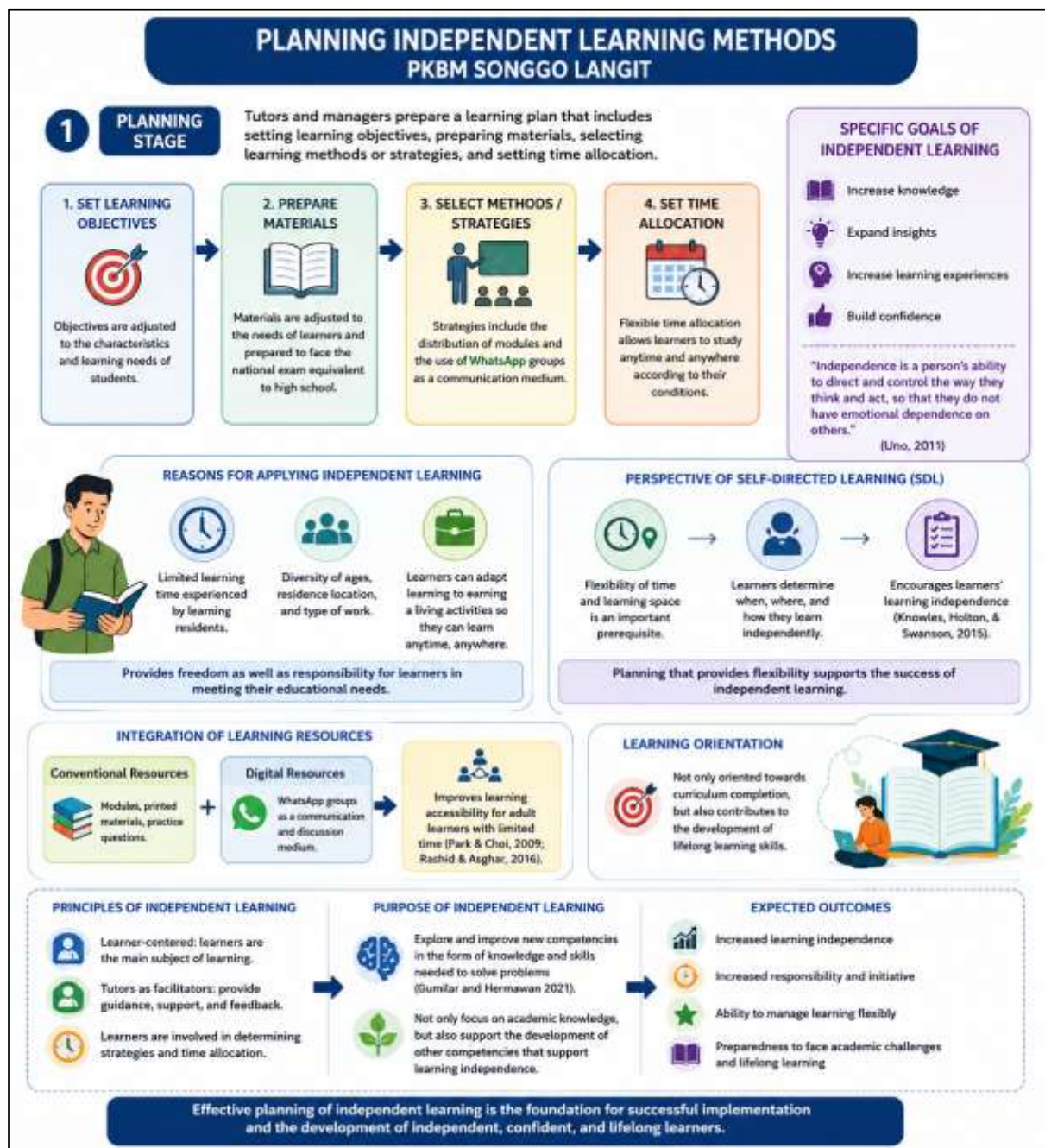


Figure 1. Planning Independent/Self Directed Learning Method
Source: Processed by the author with the help of generative AI based on research results (2025)

Furthermore, the use of WhatsApp-based modules and communication media shows the integration of conventional and digital learning resources in supporting independent learning. These findings are in line with the results of research that show that the use of simple communication technology can improve learning accessibility for adult learners who have

limited time to participate in face-to-face learning (Park & Choi, 2009; Rashid & Asghar, 2016). Thus, the self-learning applied is not only oriented towards curriculum completion, but also contributes to the development of *lifelong learning skills* which is one of the main goals of non-formal education.

The self directed learning method is a learning model that gives students the freedom to manage their own time and learning methods in accordance with the provisions that apply in the semester credit system (Suyanto 2019). The application of this method at PKBM Songgo Langit has been proven to provide solutions for learning residents who have been experiencing difficulties completing education while working. However, in the process of planning independent learning, learners should be fully involved in determining strategies and allocation of learning time. Self directed learning based on *student-centered learning* places learners as the main subject, while tutors play the role of facilitators.

The self directed learning method is intended to explore and improve various new competencies, both in the form of knowledge and skills, needed to solve various problems (Gumilar and Hermawan 2021). In the context of implementation at PKBM Songgo Langit, it is necessary to realize that mastering the aspect of academic knowledge is not the only goal. Self directed learning is not only intended for residents to learn to understand and complete practice questions in modules for the success of exams, but also to support the development of other competencies that support their learning independence.

Implementation of Independent Learning

The second stage is the implementation stage. At this stage, the self directed learning method for the Package C equality program at PKBM Songgo Langit is designed in the form of modules and individual tasks, in the form of materials and practice questions in modules that are arranged based on competencies and curriculum that must be achieved. The task is done by students according to the agreed time. With independent learning, students are expected to be able to learn independently without dependence on others.

In the implementation of independent learning, tutors apply the andragogi approach, where tutors play the role of facilitators who help students when experiencing difficulties and monitor the course of the learning process. Students are given the freedom to choose teaching materials and learning media that suit their needs in completing independent assignments, such as books or information sources from the internet that can be accessed via mobile phones. Tutors provide independent assignments through prepared learning modules.

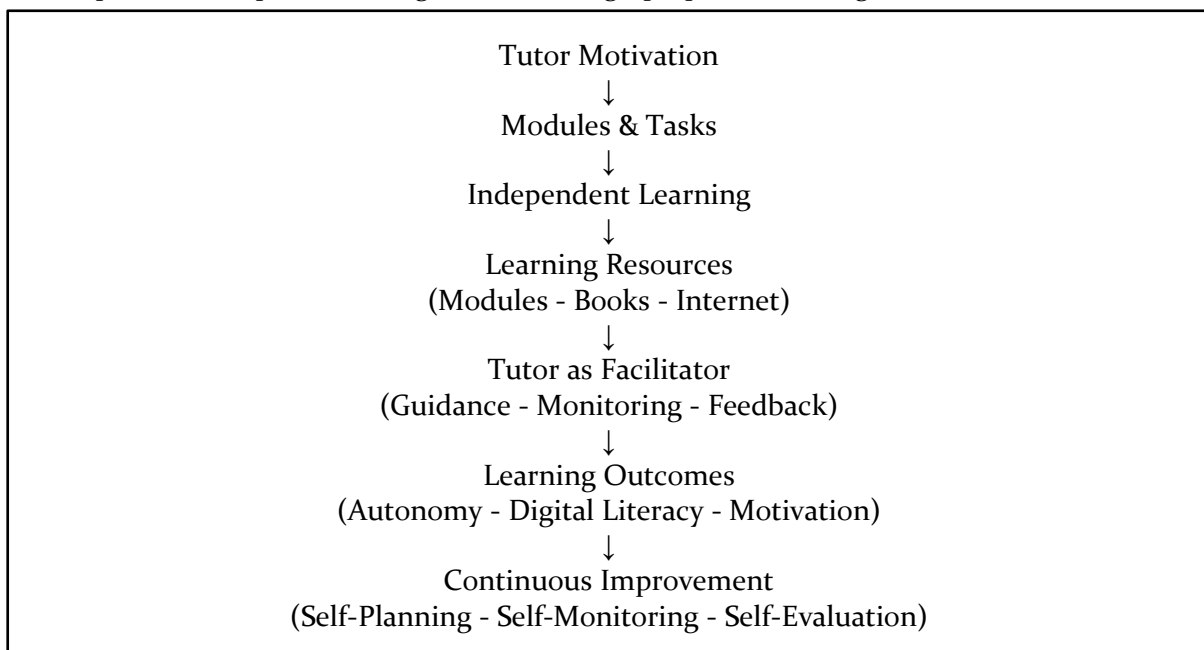


Figure 2. Implementation of Self Directed Learning in the Equality Education Program at PKBM Songgo Langit, Bengkulu City

The image shows the process of implementing self directed learning starting from the provision of motivation by tutors, the use of modules and independent assignments, the use of various learning resources, tutor assistance as facilitators, to the development of learning independence, digital literacy, and learning motivation for learners.

The implementation of self directed learning at PKBM Songgo Langit shows a shift in the role of tutors from the main source of information to learning facilitators. This role change is a key characteristic of the andragogy approach that places adult learners as individuals who are able to manage their own learning process (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015). Tutors no longer dominate the learning process, but function to provide direction, support, and feedback when learning residents experience difficulties.

The results of the study also show that residents learn to utilize various learning resources, both modules, books, and the internet through mobile phones. These findings indicate that self-paced learning has encouraged the development of *information seeking skills* and digital literacy, which are important in 21st century learning. Previous research has shown that the ability to independently access and utilize various learning resources is positively correlated with increased learning motivation, study perseverance, and academic success of adult learners (Garrison, 1997; Broadbent & Poon, 2015).

However, the results of the interviews show that some learners still depend on the direction of the tutor in determining the material that must be studied. This condition indicates that the level of learning independence possessed by learning residents has not been fully developed. Therefore, self directed learning at PKBM Songgo Langit needs to be directed not only to assigning tasks independently, but also to strengthening the ability of learning residents to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process.

Self directed learning at PKBM Songgo Langit begins with motivation by tutors to encourage students' enthusiasm for learning. This is in line with the opinion of Rusman (2011) who states that preliminary activities are important to motivate and focus students' attention so that they are actively involved in learning. The teaching materials used in self directed learning function as tutors' tools in managing learning and are adjusted to the needs of students. Self-study materials can be in the form of modules, programmatic teaching materials, or web-based digital content.

Evaluation of Self directed learning Methods

The third stage is the evaluation stage. Evaluation of the self directed learning method at PKBM Songgo Langit was carried out during the learning process and at the end of the self directed learning activity. This evaluation includes the purpose of the evaluation, its functions, the aspects to be evaluated, the form and type of evaluation, and the implementation procedure. During the learning process, tutors assess the students' progress through observation of their ability to complete independent tasks. This evaluation does not use special instruments, but is carried out by observing the learning progress of each participant. Meanwhile, the final evaluation is carried out through a *post-test* at the end of each semester. The tutor compiles exam questions based on the modules used, then assesses the learning outcomes of the learning residents based on their ability to solve the questions.

Evaluation through tests basically aims to find out the level of ability and development of learning residents, diagnose learning difficulties, find out learning outcomes, curriculum achievements, as well as encourage the development of tutors and learning residents in a better direction (Mardapi, 2017). This understanding is in accordance with the evaluation at PKBM Songgo Langit, because the *post-test* helps tutors and residents learn to recognize the abilities and learning outcomes that have been achieved through independent learning. However, *post-test* evaluation alone is not enough to identify various learning difficulties and to encourage optimal learning development. Ideally, the evaluation stage is also used as a means to detect problems that arise during the self directed learning process so that improvements can be made.

Although *post-tests* can measure learning outcomes, learning outcomes are not only seen from grades or scores. Learning outcomes reflect behavioral changes as a result of the

learning process, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Artama et al. 2024). Therefore, evaluation needs to be carried out comprehensively and continuously so that learning residents are able to develop knowledge, skills, initiatives, and responsibilities in independent learning. These changes can only be achieved if the results of the evaluation are followed up by both managers, tutors, and learning residents.

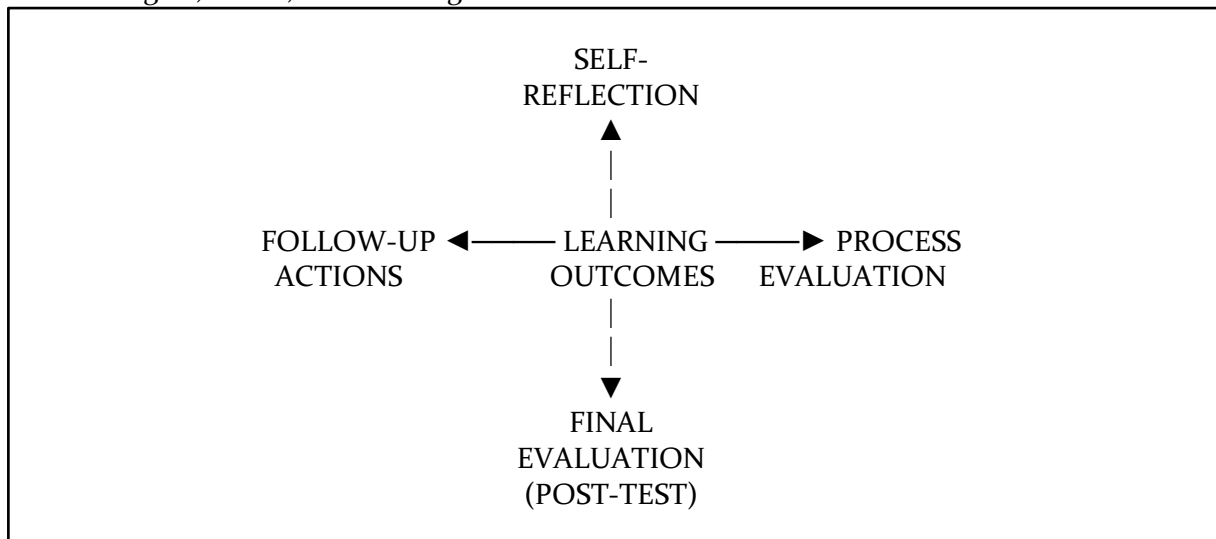


Figure 3. Evaluation Cycle of Self Directed Learning in the Equivalency Education Program (Paket C) at PKBM Songgo Langit, Bengkulu City

The figure shows that the evaluation of self directed learning is carried out in a continuous manner through process evaluation, evaluation of learning outcomes, self-reflection, and learning follow-up to support the development of learning independence of learning residents according to the principle of Self-Directed Learning.

From the perspective of *Self-Directed Learning*, evaluation not only serves to measure academic achievement, but also as a means of self-reflection for students in assessing the effectiveness of the learning strategies that have been used. Therefore, the use of post-test as the only evaluation instrument still has limitations because it emphasizes the cognitive aspect more than the affective aspect and self directed learning skills. In fact, the success of self directed learning is also determined by the ability of students to manage time, maintain learning motivation, and reflect on their learning experiences (Merriam & Bierema, 2014).

The findings of this study show that the evaluation of self directed learning at PKBM Songgo Langit is still oriented towards final learning outcomes. This condition is relatively common in the implementation of equality education which still focuses on achieving academic competency standards. However, to support the development of learning independence in a sustainable manner, evaluation should be complemented by formative assessments such as learning reflection journals, portfolios, *self-assessments*, and periodic feedback from tutors. These strategies can help learners develop *self-awareness* and learning responsibilities that are at the core of independent learning.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the application of the self directed learning method in the Package C Equality Program at PKBM Songgo Langit Bengkulu City is an adaptive learning strategy in answering the needs of productive age learning residents who must balance work activities and continuing education. The implementation of self directed learning is carried out through three main stages, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation. At the planning stage, tutors and managers prepare learning objectives, materials, strategies, and learning resources that are tailored to the characteristics and needs of the learning community. At the implementation stage, learning takes place through the use of modules, independent assignments, and various learning resources supported by the role of the tutor as a facilitator with an andragogy approach.

Meanwhile, the evaluation stage is carried out through monitoring the learning process and assessing learning outcomes through post-tests at the end of the semester.

The findings of the study indicate that self directed learning not only helps students learn to complete equality education programs in the midst of time constraints, but also encourages the development of learning independence, responsibility, initiative, and the ability to manage the learning process flexibly. Thus, self directed learning can be seen as a form of *self-directed learning* implementation that is relevant for the implementation of equality education and non-formal education for adult learners.

However, learning evaluation is still dominated by the measurement of cognitive learning outcomes through post-tests. Therefore, this study recommends that PKBM Songgo Langit develop a more comprehensive evaluation system through the use of portfolios, *self-assessment*, and learning reflection to support the development of self directed learning competencies in a sustainable manner. In addition, further research can examine the influence of self directed learning on learning motivation, learning outcomes, and lifelong learning skills in equality education programs in various PKBM contexts.

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