

# Strengthening the Non-Formal Education Sector through Social Assistance by the Government of Bitung City to Centers for Community Learning Activities in Bitung City

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**ABSTRACT:** This research illustrates how the Bitung City Government's policy through social assistance for the distribution of the implementation of non-formal education programs in the center of community learning activities to increase the level of graduation of the community in Bitung City through the Equality Examinations program. As well as how the Bitung City Government's policy related to budget assistance to the center of community learning activities can accommodate the needs of people who drop out evenly and have the same opportunity in the fulfillment of educational services in Bitung City. Thus, this research focuses on two things, namely 1) Analyzing a non-formal education budget assistance policy issued by the Bitung City Government; 2) Knowing the optimization of social assistance to the center of community learning activities for justice and equity in education for people of Bitung City. The research uses a qualitative approach with a type of descriptive research by collecting data that researchers will use, namely through: in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Through this research, it is known that the Bitung City Government has tried to strengthen the non-formal education sector through social assistance in the operational budget for equitable implementation of equality education programs at the center of community learning activities; the conclusion is that the Bitung City Government must maintain the aid policy for the long term by making a Mayor Regulation Consider the number of high school dropout communities and the limitations of the community learning activity center itself.

**KEYWORDS:** policy, non-formal education, social assistance

## I. Introduction

Education in human life is a fundamental need that must be fulfilled throughout their lives because without education it is impossible for a group of humans to progress and develop, meet their needs, and be prosperous and happy. In line with the dynamics of demands for reform, the implementation of decentralization and regional autonomy policies in accordance with Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, has provided opportunities for regions (districts/cities) to create independence in development which is of course based on democratic principles. , community participation and participation in the framework of realizing equity and justice which pays close attention to regional potential and diversity to optimize the use of local resources is also strengthened by Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government in Article 12 which states that education is included in the affairs of Regional Government Compulsory related to basic services. What is more

detailed is based on the law that the affairs of early childhood and non-formal education (PAUDNI) and basic education (SD and SMP) become the authority of district/city governments. Then the affairs of secondary education (SMA and SMK) and special education will become the authority of the provincial government

In the education sector, based on the Law on Regional Government, non-formal education is also an important part of the obligatory affairs of the City of Bitung, but various problems regarding education that are so diverse require a strategy for structured change and can adapt to change and progress, changes. The problems that occur in the education sector can still be categorized as classic problems, namely questions about quality, equity, and regulations issued by the government, such as the regulation on operational assistance for equality education from the Central Government, in this case, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia which set out in the 2022 Non-Formal Education Operational Assistance (BOP Channel) technical guidelines, there are regulations related to operational assistance for equality education which only accommodate students aged 7 to 21 years. In accordance with the data obtained, in Bitung City there is still a relatively high phenomenon of dropping out of school where there are as many as 8,780 people dropping out of school (Bitung City Education and Culture Office, 2022) with details of 2,540 people aged 7 to 21 years and 6,240 people over 21 years of age.

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the group of people who drop out of school with an age range of 21 years and over is still very high where they are people who need non-formal education services but are not accommodated by assistance regulations from the Central Government. Basically, a problem mostly originates in terms of equity and quality in the field of education. Etymologically equity equality can be interpreted as follows, namely (Danim, 2004); Equity means justice in obtaining equal educational opportunities among various groups in society. As for equality, namely equality which implies the equal opportunity to obtain education. Meanwhile, Rusman (Rusman, 2012) stated that equity has meaning in increasing fairness and opportunities for students to achieve maximum results. Meanwhile, equity in education in this case includes two important aspects, namely (Mujahidun, 2016): equality and equity. Equality or equality implies the equal opportunity to obtain an education, while equity means justice in obtaining equal educational opportunities among various groups in society. Equitable access to education means that all school-age residents have had educational opportunities, while access to education will be said to be fair if groups can enjoy education equally. And there are main indicators that are understood in terms of equal distribution of education, namely the number of schools per school-age population for each district/city and the number of teachers per school per district/city. Riant Nugroho (H.A.R Tilaar, 2009) also added indicators as an extension of the indicators above, namely the number of students per school, the number of dropouts, and the number of illiterates. However, even this distribution is highly dependent on the provision of the education budget from both APBN and APBD sources

Coleman in his book Equality of educational opportunity states that (Coleman, 1968) the concept of equity includes passive equity, namely equity that places more emphasis on equality of opportunity to enroll in school. Meanwhile, active equity is defined as equality in providing opportunities for enrolled students to obtain the

highest possible learning outcomes. Therefore, the concept of educational equity is broad, and includes the following matters: equality of access, and equality of survival. equality of output, and equality of outcome.

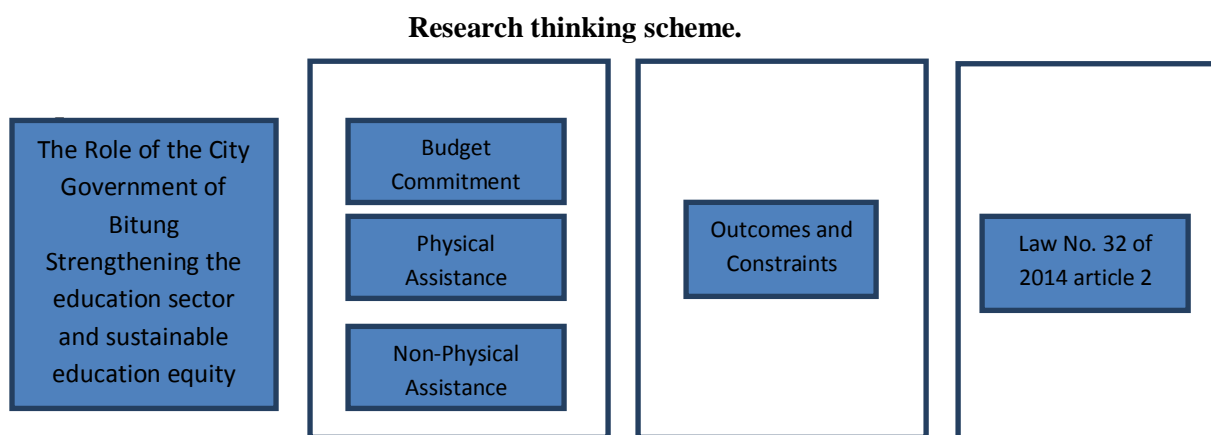
This also happened in Bitung City related to equity or opportunities for people who drop out of school to be able to get educational services in the non-formal education sector, this is a challenge for the Bitung City Government to be able to overcome these problems through policy-making of budget assistance to Community Learning Activity Centers which hereinafter referred to as PKBM. It is noted that in Bitung City there are 18 PKBMs, 13 of which are active in running non-formal education services, the rest are known to be inactive (District of Education and Culture of Bitung City, (2022), PKBM as a provider of non-formal education services is required to run the equality education program Package A, Package B and Package C. as well as skill courses, computer training, foreign languages, and community reading gardens which are part of the educational equity program which are useful for providing access to higher education for the community. Meanwhile according to RI Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 26 paragraph 1 states the following: (Non-formal education is held for citizens who need educational services that function as a substitute, supplement, and/or complement to formal education in the context of supporting lifelong education) and in article 26 paragraph 3 mentions non-formal education includes skills education life, early childhood education, youth education, women's empowerment education, literacy education, skills education, job training, equality education, and other education aimed at developing students' abilities. Through this law it can be understood that the equality education program carried out by the non-formal education sector can be included in its function as a substitute for formal education, this helps people who cannot complete education at the formal education level to be able to continue their education to the next level of education through an equivalency exam.

Based on the results of research observations conducted at PKBM and the Education & Culture Office of the Bitung City Government, it is known that there are still problems or gaps in equity and community opportunities to be able to meet the needs of non-formal education services caused by regulations on equality education assistance from the Central Government which do not accommodate participants with an age range of more than 21 years. As well as the absence of long-term regulations from the Bitung City Government related to non-formal education equity assistance which regulates budget assistance for PKBM in a strong and permanent legal entity, even though it was previously known that the Bitung City Government had provided budget assistance for PKBM in the form of grants sourced from the City APBD Bitung in 2022 so that it can accommodate all people who need non-formal education services, but this certainly has not been able to solve problems related to the distribution of non-formal education in Bitung City in a short time because of the high number of prospective students in PKBM and also the capacity of PKBM itself to accommodate potential participants.

Blau and Abramovits (2004) define social welfare policy as a public response to problems that are ready to be handled by society, social institutions consisting of programs and services funded by the government targeted at basic needs, and an action strategy that guides government intervention in the field of provision social welfare. From this explanation, it is known that the non-formal education social budget assistance policy is the

government's attempt to intervene in problems that occur in society. Previous research that was relevant, including Yunauarius Ricardus Natal (2020), with the research title "Government Policy Concerning the Provision of Educational Sports Facilities and Infrastructure in Public Middle Schools throughout the Bajawa District" explained that based on changes in regional autonomy related to education this forced schools to be independent in meet their needs. And in Mita Septiani's research (2015) with the title "PKBM Experience in Facilitating Lifelong Learning Communities" the research results in equal distribution of PKBM in North Jakarta, and the implementation of the equality education program is held differently because the students have different characters. The research of M. Kamalia, N Syakira, and M Mahir (2020) with the title "Analysis of Educational Policy on the Zoning System in Accepting New Students" states that the government must make continuous improvements to all components of education. And in Yulianus Nardin's research (2019) "Village Government Policies in Community Empowerment in the Bumdes Program", namely the role of the village government in community empowerment in the village-owned enterprise program can already run effectively because interventions are carried out through steps to regulate and manage village potential. And in Entoh Tohani's (2010) research "CLC Capacity Building Strategy as a Service Provider in the Education Sector" describes how the PKBM strategy in providing community education services only adheres to the Ministry of National Education's program and there is no breakthrough program from PKBM itself. Research by Gunartin, Soffiatun, H Feb Amni Hayati (2019) "Center for Community Learning Activities as an Alternative Place for Growing Entrepreneurial Entrepreneurial Citizens Learning (Study on PKBM Insan Karya Pamulang South Tangerang) conveys that the government's role for PKBM in developing entrepreneurial abilities as social capital is still very minimal. Meanwhile, according to Venadya Gracia Audrelia (2021) "Implementation of Community Learning Activity Centers (PKBM) in Class IIA Cibinong Penitentiary" states that the process of implementing PKBM activities in correctional institutions with a cooperative system is very high, with evidence of the enthusiasm of students to take part in package learning C. Cenny Ningsih Haruna (2018) "Effectiveness of Package B and Package C Equality Education Programs by the Cendika Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM) in Pangandaran Regency" states that the implementation of package B and C equality education programs at Cendika PKBM has been running effectively in accordance with the effectiveness of the standard but there are still a number of obstacles that become obstacles in the form of materials that are still lacking and also limited access which limits PKBM from carrying out a visit to remote areas.

From the results of previous research and problems related to the gaps that occur, it can be seen how little intervention the city government has for PKBM needs for the development of non-formal education programs through a policy, this is the basis for researchers to develop this research to look at policies on educational operational budget assistance equality from the Bitung City Government because through assistance from the Bitung City Government, it can solve problems that occur related to opportunities and equity of education in Bitung City



## II. Research Method

The approach and type of research in this study used a qualitative approach because it was based on research objectives which wanted to find out more about government budget policies to strengthen the education sector in Bitung City through community learning activity centers (PKBM) on social development in Bitung city and used analysis with an approach inductive. With the number of responses in this study, there were 5 informants consisting of 4 heads of community learning activity centers, namely PKBM Kanaba & Nayomi, PKBM Cinta Kasih, PKBM Becs Berkarya, PKBM Syalom, and the head of the Education and Culture Office of Bitung City. guidelines so that the focus of research is on the facts and phenomena found at the location or place of research. The qualitative approach in this study is to match the actual data using theory with the use of descriptive methods, and the formulation of the problem to be studied will determine the method of observation and in-depth research.

Cresswell (2016: 13) explains the research method is a research plan and procedure which includes steps in the form of broad assumptions to detailed methods in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Creswell (2016: 4) explains that qualitative research is a method for exploiting and understanding the meaning that many individuals or groups of people ascribe to social or humanitarian issues.

The research method used is descriptive with a qualitative approach. Descriptive research is writing that describes the actual situation of the object under study, according to the actual situation during direct research, the data collected is in the form of data derived from manuscripts, interviews, field notes, and document studies.

## III. Discussion

The Community Learning Activity Center is an educational institution unit that runs out-of-school education programs for people who are degraded from the formal education system and how PKBM functions to reach out widely for opportunities to get educational services for people who have dropped out of school in various age

groups, PKBM is under the auspices of the Government City of Bitung through the education and culture office, PKBM has an obligation to implement an equality education program which is currently present to support the completion of the compulsory education program for the community and its involvement in providing out-of-school education services as an important part of education services for the community, various equality education programs and skills courses in non-formal education, namely the Package A, Package B and Package C examination programs, and training in computer skills, cooking, community reading gardens and foreign language courses are services that can encourage the improvement of the quality of education for the community and specifically support the increase in the number of graduates at a certain level of education that is useful as fulfilling the requirements for the workforce. RI Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 26 paragraph 1 states the following: (Non-formal education is organized for citizens who need educational services that function as a substitute, enhancer, and/or complement to formal education in the context of supporting lifelong education).

This study explains the importance of the role of the central and regional governments in supporting the implementation of equality education programs to achieve human resource development and meet the needs of education services for the community through educational operational budget assistance to non-formal educational institutions to expand the affordability of educational equity for people in Bitung City.

### **3.1 Role of Central Government**

The Center for Community Learning Activities in implementing its equality education program receives support from the Central Government, the support received is in the form of equality operational education assistance (BOP) which accommodates participants from the age range of 7 to 21 years, specifically for the age of students who are registered as participants in the equality education package A, package B and package C in the dapodik system of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia for people who have dropped out of school or who have never received education services from an early age listed in the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2022 , concerning technical guidelines for managing operational assistance funds for the implementation of early childhood education, school operational assistance and operational assistance for the implementation of equality education which stipulates that the assistance is only intended for participants registered at Dapodik who are aged 7 to 21 years, but this is what became an obstacle for PKBM in Bitung City because in the field it was found that students and prospective participants were more dominantly occupied by those aged more than 21 years.

As stated by PKBM Syalom, operational assistance for equality education received from central government regulations only accommodates participants of a certain age and this assistance has not been able to meet the needs of implementing equality education programs at PKBM.

" However, if the assistance from the central government goes directly to the PKBM account itself, these are those aged 7 to 21 who are from the center, but the rest, many of whom are aged 21 and over,

cannot receive assistance from the center, so the Bitung city government will assist hopefully at the end of 2022” (SK, 17/11/22)

This was also emphasized by the head of the PAUD and non-formal department of the education and culture office of the Bitung city government that if PKBM only relied on assistance from the central government, it would not be enough to finance PKBM work operations, this happened because the rate of dropouts in Bitung City was still relatively high. , and this certainly has an impact on increasing participation in PKBM.

" In our opinion at the Education Office, indeed the assistance provided in the form of Bop money along with the infrastructure provided is not sufficient because we see the progress in each PKBM for dropping out of school, it is related to the amount. I said it wasn't small, but it couldn't meet the needs of the PKBM itself. Because in implementing the PKBM program activities, if it's not accompanied by the available infrastructure, it's a bit difficult, especially because the skill infrastructure is what PKBM needs.” (WL,17/12/22)

### **3.2 The Role of Local Government of Bitung City**

To increase and reach educational equity in Bitung City, the Bitung City Government is committed to assisting community learning activity centers in implementing non-formal education programs. as well as 1 unit of laptops from the private sector distributed by the Education and Culture Office of Bitung City and not only there the government has also planned non-physical assistance in the form of operational budgets for the implementation of non-formal education programs to overcome regulatory problems in assistance for students from the Central Government.

As informed by the PKBM head informant, the assistance provided in the form of facilities and infrastructure from the company was channeled through the Education and Culture Office in the form of TVs and laptops.

"Nowadays, it the government this year through the current government, the current mayor, is collaborating with companies for CSR funds, now this CSR is for the benefit of improving the quality of learning at PKBM, one of which is Sarpas (facilities and infrastructure) such as television and computers. , So what was received was 1 laptop and 1 tv, well at least it has lightened up a bit because there have been additional units. Because the laptops in this PKBM are old, some need to be serviced, so when there are additional ones, it's quite helpful." –(OB,09/11/22) .”

#### **a. Physical Assistance**

Operational assistance to PKBM has been sought by the local government in the form of assistance with facilities and infrastructure for the continuation of non-formal education learning activities, as informed by the

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PKBM head informant that he has received assistance in the form of installing free internet access from the government to support online learning

"The number of learning residents in PKBM Syalom is divided into two for ages 21 and under package A 5 people Package B 21 people Package C 69 people There are also students from outside areas, but with a note that they have to come to study, but because there is assistance wifi government they can also study online, but for a while because there is no covid but money will be returned to them far away." – (SK,17/11/22)

However, the distribution of free internet access assistance from the Government of Bitung City is still not evenly distributed in the field, it is found in the field that there are PKBMs that have not yet received this access, due to network access constraints and the location of the PKBM which is across the island, this was informed directly by the head PKBM Cinta Kasih who are on Lembeh Island said that they had not received wifi assistance from the government, even though they had received physical assistance in the form of laptops and TV distributed by the education office.

"Indeed, recently we received assistance with 1 laptop and 1 TV but that was assistance from the company or CSR but through the agency. So through the education office, it assists or is distributed to all PKBMs. We also haven't received free wifi assistance. I, as PKBM chairman, have tried to contact the sub-district head and village head because there is one point that hasn't been used but so far it hasn't been realized. Even though they have reported to the sub-district head and lurch who were gathered here at that time, PKBM needs the wifi because this learning, there are learning residents on the ship who are temporarily working, we will provide learning online but because there is no wifi it doesn't work." –(RD,11/21/22)

Government assistance in physical form has been carried out by utilizing CSR assistance from companies to PKBM as a form of government commitment to assisting equality education operational activities, but there are problems related to the distribution of free internet access assistance for PKBM which is still uneven towards PKBM, especially those in island areas constrained by network access.

#### **b. Non-Physical Assistance**

The PKBM problem in implementing equality education is that the operational budget is insufficient if it is only based on assistance from the central government, for this reason, the City Government of Bitung is to resolve this problem, in 2022 for the first time by budgeting in the APBD to assist non-formal education activities in Bitung City with the amount assistance will adjust to the needs of the PKBM or the number of participants registered in the PKBM.

This was informed the Head of the Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education Sector that in 2023 there would be assistance from the local government in the form of operational budget assistance for PKBM in Bitung City.



" For 2023, we have budgeted 2.5 billion out of 2.5, apart from the equal BOP, it is also allocated for facilities and infrastructure. (WL,17/12/22)

In line with information from the Education and Culture Office of Bitung City, this was also confirmed by PKBM that indeed in 2022 - 2023 the Bitung City government has socialized regarding operational budget assistance for all PKBMs in Bitung City. This was also conveyed by the head of PKBM Becs Berkarya that non-physical assistance in the form of an operational budget from the Bitung City Government is also in the process of being drafted to be submitted to the Bitung City Government APBD, which later the nominal amount to be received will follow from the number of students who register for equality education in 2023

"If it is non-physical, this year the government is temporarily trying to include it in the budget, there are funds from the APBD for PKBM in Bitung, but these funds are in the process, he said, maybe in 2022 or even 2023. So there are indeed government efforts to help physically and non-physical. Regarding non-physical assistance, if I'm not mistaken, it follows the same number from 7 to 21 years old as the center, but that's the budget from the APBD because yesterday I heard information that 7 to 21 years old is the center. So when the equality program was said to be free by the local government and indeed the government is very concerned about this problem, so when it is said that it is free and then only getting 30% of the cost, this is a bit burdensome. If I'm not mistaken, this figure is 60 million but divided by 2, stage one is 30s, and stage two is 30s. So it's based on the number of registered students" (OB, 09/11/22)

So based on information received from informants that the Government of Bitung City has tried to assist in the implementation of equality education for PKBM by creating a budgetary social assistance policy to accommodate the problems of school dropouts in Bitung City to register for free so that there is justice and equity in education in Bitung City, This can be achieved through community learning activity centers.

**Matrix Table**

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Problems</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
The Role of Bitung City Government	The high dropout rate in Bitung City.	Make policies in strengthening the non-formal education sector in the form of a Mayor Regulation (PERWAKO) which regulates the distribution of operational budget assistance for equality education for PKBMs with the amount of assistance adjusting to the number of participants or people who register at PKBMs which are multi-
	The average community only graduated from junior high school.	
	There is no long-term educational operational assistance to PKBM from the local government.	

		years to achieve equity in non-formal education in Bitung City
Equality Education Social Assistance	Operational assistance for equality education is only received from the Central Government which can only accommodate students in PKBM in the age range of 7 to 21 years	In distributing physical assistance to PKBM, the education service as an institution that has the authority to implement policies, must be able to open up more collaboration with parties from outside the government to be able to assist community learning activity centers in fulfilling equality education learning facilities and infrastructure.  As well as for free internet access assistance to PKBM, the education service must make an application letter to the Government of Bitung City, to prioritize the installation of free internet access to PKBM as the place for implementing educational learning.
	Collaborative relationships with other parties in supporting the provision of non-formal education learning have not been maximized	
	Physical assistance in the form of free internet access to PKBM has not been received equally	
Non-formal education social services	There is no form of cooperation with the private sector carried out by PKBM to support PKBM needs	The implementation of the equality education program in Bitung City carried out by PKBM does not always have to depend on government assistance alone, therefore all PKBMs are required to plan <i>funding</i> and partnerships with other parties outside the government that support or have the same values regarding the provision of existing non-formal education learning and to PKBM.
	On average, PKBM does not have a special study room to carry out learning activities	

Source: processed by researchers

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The implementation of non-formal education in Bitung City by the community learning activity center has fundamental problems with implications that have quite an impact on the social welfare of the people of Bitung

City, one of which is the high dropout rate as well as the problem of the operational assistance budget for equality education from the Central Government which PKBM receives can only accommodate participants aged 7 to 21 years, with the number of participants continuing to increase in each implementation, especially the increase in participants with an age range of 21 years and over will certainly have an impact on the implementation of the equality education program which is not optimal when viewed from the operational budget requirements.

The Government of Bitung City in strengthening the non-formal education sector has issued a policy for providing social assistance in the form of a budget for the implementation of non-formal education at PKBM, which is budgeted directly from the 2022 APBD to be distributed to PKBM in 2023 through the education and culture office of the Bitung City Government as a form of government commitment towards justice and the outreach of educational equity to the community. Meanwhile, for the provision of physical assistance, the local government has collaborated with the private sector in the form of Corporate Social Responsibility as a form of support in improving education by assisting in the form of laptops and televisions to each PKBM, which in practice has been carried out and distributed evenly. In addition to recruiting various private parties, the government has also sought physical assistance in the form of installing free internet access for each PKBM, but unfortunately, these efforts have not been distributed evenly, especially for PKBMs located in archipelago areas. to be able to overcome this situation (concerning the distribution of internet access installations) the government is obliged to re-collect data and participate in rethinking distribution solutions for internet access so that it can be distributed evenly to each PKBM which will certainly have an impact on increasing the level of satisfaction with PKBM services for the community in the city. Bitung itself.

While regarding the distribution of social assistance in the form of a budget in 2023 for equality education operations which are still temporary, it is hoped that the Bitung City government will need to make a separate regulation in the form of a Mayor Regulation (PERWAKO) or Regional Regulation (PERDA) to regulate the long-term sustainability of this assistance or multi-years in nature so that it can be implemented measurably for each target expected of the program so that the continuity of assistance strengthened by PERWAKO is assumed to have an impact on increasing the education graduation rate and reducing the unemployment rate in Bitung City so that the social welfare of the education sector in Bitung City can be an increase

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