

Developing a Local Economy-Based Partnership Model to Strengthen Work Skills in Community Learning Centers

Agung Sudarmanto¹, Novianty Djafri², Misran Rahman³

¹ Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia; agungsudarmanto998@gmail.com

² Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia; noviantidjafri@ung.ac.id

³ Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia; misran@ung.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Non-formal education plays a crucial role in developing vocational competencies and promoting community economic empowerment. However, Community Learning Centers (PKBM) frequently encounter challenges in aligning skills development programs with local economic opportunities due to limited stakeholder collaboration. This study aimed to develop and evaluate a local economy-based partnership model to strengthen collaboration supporting work-skills development in PKBM. This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the Four-D model: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. The research involved two PKBM institutions in Bunta District, Banggai Regency. Data were collected through interviews, observations, documentation, expert validation, and questionnaires. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively, while qualitative data were examined thematically. The study produced the AGS Partnership Model, integrating Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism. Initial findings revealed that 44.7% of learners had not entered employment or established independent businesses. Expert validation indicated that the model was suitable for implementation with revisions. Questionnaire results showed an increase in average partnership scores from 1.12 in the initial assessment to approximately 3.50 following implementation, indicating improved stakeholder perceptions of partnership quality. The AGS model provides a contextual framework for integrating local economic potential into non-formal education through equitable participation, transparent governance, and mutually beneficial collaboration. The findings demonstrate improved partnership practices, although direct effects on learners' work skills require further investigation.

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Corresponding Author:

Agung Sudarmanto

Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia; agungsudarmanto998@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Global economic transformation and the rapid evolution of the labor market in the digital era require a workforce equipped with relevant, adaptive, and market-oriented skills. International reports consistently highlight vocational skills development and multi-stakeholder collaboration as essential

strategies for enhancing employability, particularly among populations with limited access to formal education. Recent studies emphasize that partnerships among educational institutions, governments, businesses, and communities play a crucial role in creating sustainable training programs that are responsive to local economic needs (UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2023; ILO, 2024).

Recent international literature further indicates that workforce skills development in the twenty-first century can no longer rely solely on conventional training approaches but requires close collaboration among educational institutions, governments, industries, and communities. Joint reports by UNESCO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the World Bank reveal that vocational education and training programs in many developing countries continue to experience significant mismatches between the skills provided through training and the competencies demanded by labor markets. Consequently, education and training systems need to become more responsive to industry needs, partnership-based, and aligned with local economic potential in order to enhance learners' competitiveness and employability.

The OECD (2023) further emphasizes the importance of developing vocational education and training systems that are adaptable to economic transformation, technological advancement, and future workforce demands. Partnerships between educational institutions and productive sectors are regarded as key factors in ensuring that learning remains relevant to labor market requirements. Similarly, Gupta and Mittal (2024) found that demand-driven vocational training and experiential learning approaches significantly improve employment opportunities, support local economic development, and strengthen the sustainability of community-based skills programs. Furthermore, recent studies on adult education and lifelong learning highlight the significant contribution of non-formal education to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in promoting employment, economic empowerment, and social inclusion. The success of non-formal education programs largely depends on the ability of educational providers to establish sustainable partnerships with local stakeholders and economic actors.

In Indonesia, Community Learning Centers (PKBM) play a strategic role in providing non-formal education programs aimed at enhancing skills, empowering communities, and strengthening the economic independence of learners. However, many PKBM training programs continue to face challenges in connecting learning outcomes with labor market needs and local economic opportunities. Previous studies indicate that skills training programs are often generic, insufficiently aligned with market demands, and supported by limited collaboration with business and industry sectors (Karnain & Rahman, 2020; Minggus et al., 2024).

Despite the growing body of research on skills training, community empowerment, and partnerships in non-formal education, a significant research gap remains. Most previous studies have focused on evaluating training programs or examining institutional cooperation in general terms without developing an operational partnership model that systematically integrates local economic potential, labor market needs, learner characteristics, and the strategic roles of PKBM tutors and managers. Moreover, studies that explicitly incorporate the principles of equity, transparency, and mutualism into the development of a local economy-based partnership model within non-formal education settings remain limited. This gap highlights the need for a more contextual, adaptive, and sustainable partnership model to strengthen learners' work skills.

This issue is evident in Bunta District, which possesses considerable local economic potential in fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing industries. However, these resources have not been optimally integrated into non-formal education programs implemented by PKBM. According to PKBM Bunta data in 2025, out of 38 learners who completed the learning program, 17 had neither entered the workforce nor established independent businesses. This situation indicates a weak connection between training programs and labor market demands, as well as insufficient synergy among PKBM, local government, and local business actors.

In the context of partnership development, Ros Tennyson argues that effective and sustainable partnerships should be built upon three fundamental principles: equity, transparency, and mutualism.

These principles facilitate collaborative relationships that integrate resources, knowledge, and stakeholder interests to achieve shared objectives. This perspective is supported by Ansell and Gash (2008), who emphasize that collaborative governance is a critical factor in community-based development because it promotes participation, transparency, and program sustainability.

Based on the issues outlined above, this research is considered important to undertake. The novelty of this study lies in the development of the AGS Partnership Model (Access to Equity, Governance Transparency, and Mutualism Synergy), which goes beyond general institutional cooperation by specifically integrating local economic potential, the role of PKBM tutors, local business needs, learner characteristics, and local government support into a single operational and contextual framework. The model is developed through a Research and Development (R&D) approach guided by Thiagarajan's Four-D Model, consisting of Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate stages.

The AGS Partnership Model illustrates a collaborative relationship among four key actors: government, business actors, PKBM managers, and learners. These actors interact within an integrated and sustainable partnership system based on the principles of equitable access, transparent governance, and mutualistic synergy. Unlike previous partnership approaches that primarily focus on institutional cooperation, the AGS Model positions local economic potential as the foundation for workforce skills development, ensuring that training programs are more relevant to labor market needs and local entrepreneurial opportunities.

Therefore, this study is expected to contribute theoretically by enriching the literature on local economy-based partnership models in non-formal education. Practically, the model may serve as a reference for PKBM institutions, local governments, and business actors in improving training relevance, enhancing graduate employability, expanding self-employment opportunities, and strengthening community economic independence through sustainable collaborative partnerships

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach to develop and evaluate the AGS Partnership Model (Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism), a local economy-based partnership framework designed to support work-skills development in Community Learning Centers (PKBM). The R&D approach was selected because the study focused on producing a contextual educational partnership model and examining its feasibility and implementation within non-formal education institutions.

The development process adopted the Four-D (4D) model proposed by Thiagarajan, Semmel, and Semmel (1974), comprising four stages: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. This framework provided a systematic procedure for identifying partnership needs, designing the proposed model, validating its components, conducting field trials, and introducing the developed model to relevant stakeholders.

The study integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were used to describe stakeholder assessments of partnership practices, while qualitative data provided contextual information regarding institutional needs, stakeholder participation, and model implementation. Both types of data were considered during the interpretation of the development and evaluation findings.

2.2 Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at PKBM Pantai Indah Pongian and PKBM Global Bunta, located in Bunta District, Banggai Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. These institutions were selected because of their involvement in non-formal education and skills-development activities within a local economic environment characterized by fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing.

The study involved 54 participants, consisting of 38 learners, four PKBM managers, six tutors, five local business actors, and one local government representative. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their involvement in educational programs, partnership activities, and local economic development. Their participation enabled the researchers to examine partnership needs and implementation from multiple stakeholder perspectives.

2.3 Model Development Procedures

The development of the AGS Partnership Model followed four interconnected stages.

1. Define Stage

The Define stage focused on identifying existing partnership conditions, learners' work-skills development needs, and opportunities for integrating local economic resources into PKBM programs. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and institutional documentation involving PKBM managers, tutors, learners, local business actors, and government representatives.

The needs assessment examined stakeholder participation, partnership coordination, training relevance, and the availability of local economic opportunities. The findings served as the empirical foundation for establishing the objectives, components, and operational requirements of the proposed partnership model.

2. Design Stage

The Design stage involved formulating the conceptual and operational structure of the AGS Partnership Model based on the needs assessment and Tennyson's (2005) partnership principles. The model incorporated three interconnected dimensions: Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism.

Access Equality emphasized equitable opportunities for stakeholders to participate in partnership planning and decision-making. Governance Transparency focused on information accessibility, clearly defined responsibilities, and accountability in partnership implementation. Synergy Mutualism emphasized reciprocal benefits and resource sharing among participating institutions and stakeholders.

These dimensions were integrated into a collaborative framework involving local government, PKBM management, local business actors, and learners. The design process also produced a partnership guidebook outlining procedures for partnership planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

3. Develop Stage

The Develop stage involved expert validation, product revision, and limited field testing to examine the feasibility and initial implementation of the proposed model.

The partnership guidebook was evaluated by four validators representing content expertise, layout design, language expertise, and educational practice. The validation process focused on the relevance of the model's content, clarity of implementation procedures, presentation quality, language accuracy, and applicability to PKBM partnership activities.

Feedback from the validators was used to revise the guidebook, particularly its terminology, visual presentation, stakeholder responsibilities, partnership procedures, and indicators of implementation success.

Following validation and revision, a limited field assessment involving 15 respondents was conducted to examine existing partnership practices using a structured questionnaire. The assessment covered indicators representing equality, transparency, and mutualism. The results were used to identify areas requiring further strengthening during model implementation.

4. Disseminate Stage

The Disseminate stage involved introducing the developed AGS Partnership Model to relevant stakeholders through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and field implementation activities. These activities provided opportunities for stakeholders to examine the model's applicability and discuss its potential integration into PKBM partnership practices.

A subsequent questionnaire assessment involving 15 respondents was conducted to describe stakeholder perceptions of partnership implementation. The assessment focused on the same three partnership dimensions: equality, transparency, and mutualism.

The dissemination activities also generated stakeholder feedback regarding the model's practical application and potential adoption in other non-formal education settings.

2.4 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Data were collected using interviews, observations, documentation, expert validation, and structured questionnaires.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore partnership challenges, stakeholder expectations, institutional responsibilities, and opportunities for collaboration with local economic actors. Observations were conducted to examine partnership practices and stakeholder interactions in the PKBM environment. Documentation was used to obtain supporting information concerning institutional programs, learner conditions, and existing partnership arrangements.

Expert validation instruments were employed to assess the feasibility and clarity of the developed partnership guidebook. Meanwhile, structured questionnaires were used to assess stakeholder perceptions of partnership implementation across three dimensions: Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism.

The partnership questionnaire comprised ten indicators assessed using a four-point rating scale. The indicators represented stakeholder participation, transparency in partnership governance, and perceived mutual benefits. Higher scores indicated more favorable assessments of partnership implementation.

2.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including total scores, mean scores, and average scores per indicator. Questionnaire scores were calculated by dividing the total score obtained by the number of respondents. The mean score per indicator was subsequently determined by dividing the respondent mean by the number of questionnaire indicators.

The questionnaire results were interpreted using four predefined categories: very low (1.00–1.49), low (1.50–2.49), high (2.50–3.49), and very high (3.50–4.00). These categories were used to describe the perceived quality of partnership implementation.

Results from the initial and subsequent assessments were compared descriptively to identify differences in stakeholder perceptions of partnership practices. Because the available evaluation focused on partnership implementation, the findings were interpreted as evidence of changes in perceived partnership quality rather than direct measurements of improvements in learners' vocational competencies.

Qualitative data obtained from interviews, observations, documentation, and stakeholder discussions were analyzed thematically through data organization, coding, categorization, identification of recurring themes, and interpretation. The qualitative findings were used to contextualize the questionnaire results and explain the partnership conditions identified during model development.

2.5 Trustworthiness and Research Ethics

The credibility of qualitative findings was supported through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing. Information obtained from different stakeholder groups and data collection techniques was compared to strengthen the consistency and credibility of the interpretations.

The study followed ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data management. Participants were informed about the research objectives and their right to withdraw from the study without adverse consequences. Information collected during the research was used exclusively for academic purposes, and participant identities were protected throughout the reporting process.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Define Stage: Needs Assessment and Identification of Local Economic Potential

The Define stage was carried out to determine the work-skill requirements of learners, the current state of partnerships, and the potential for local economic growth in Bunta District. Data collected from PKBM Pantai Indah Pongian and PKBM Global Bunta showed that 17 out of 38 learners (44.7%) had neither entered employment nor established independent businesses after completing the learning program. This result shows that training results and labour market absorption differ significantly. These results show a disconnect between training initiatives and the demands of the labour market. The situation confirms the importance of developing a partnership model capable of connecting learning activities with local economic opportunities. This finding supports Ife's (2013) community empowerment theory, which emphasizes that empowerment occurs when communities gain access to resources, participation opportunities, and involvement in decision-making processes.

Furthermore, the findings align with OECD (2023) and ILO (2024), which highlight that vocational training programs become more effective when they are linked to local labor-market demands and supported by multi-stakeholder collaboration. Therefore, the Define stage provided a strong empirical foundation for developing a context-based partnership model that responds directly to the needs of learners and local economic sectors.

The needs analysis also revealed three major partnership challenges: (1) limited learner involvement in planning and decision-making processes, (2) weak communication and coordination between PKBM and local business actors, and (3) insufficient alignment between training programs and local economic opportunities. At the same time, Bunta District possesses significant economic potential in fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing sectors, which have not been optimally integrated into PKBM training programs.

Table 1. Initial Conditions of Partnership and Work-Skill Development

Indicator	Findings
Total learners	38
Learners not employed/self-employed	17 (44.7%)
Main economic sectors	Fisheries, agriculture, local product processing
Formal partnership mechanism	Not available
Learner participation in planning	Limited
Business involvement in training	Low

These findings provided empirical evidence supporting the need for a structured partnership model capable of linking local economic opportunities with work-skills development.

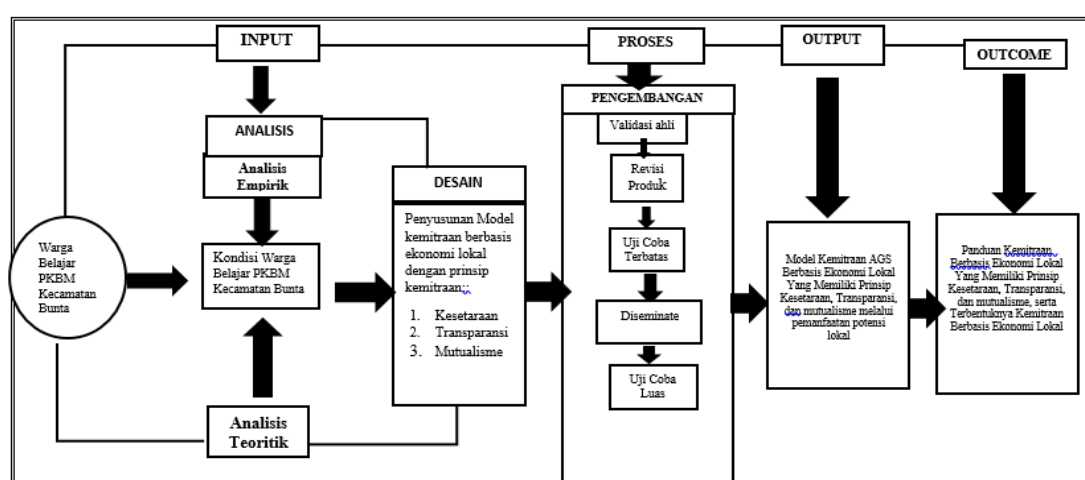
3.2 Design Stage: Development of the AGS Partnership Model

The AGS Partnership Model (Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism) was created using the results from the Define step. The model integrates four key stakeholders: local government, PKBM management, local business actors, and learners.

The model is operationalized through three partnership principles:

1. Access Equality
2. Governance Transparency
3. Synergy Mutualism

The design stage produced a partnership handbook consisting of three chapters that provide operational guidelines for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating local economy-based partnerships.



Gambar 4.2 Model Yang Di Rekomendasikan Kemitraan Adaptasi Dari Teori Prinsip Kemitraan TennyRison Dengan Metode 4 D |

Figure 1. The Proposed AGS Partnership Model Based on Tennyson's Partnership Principles and the Four-D (4D) Development Framework

The model establishes collaborative relationships among stakeholders and ensures that training activities are directly connected to local economic opportunities. The model design resulted in a Local Economy-Based Partnership Manual consisting of planning mechanisms, implementation procedures, monitoring systems, and evaluation guidelines. The model also emphasizes direct linkages between learning activities and local economic sectors, particularly fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing.

The development of the AGS model reflects a shift from conventional training approaches toward participatory and contextual learning. This finding supports Johnson's (2034) contextual learning theory, which argues that learning becomes more meaningful when linked to real-life work situations. Unlike previous studies that primarily viewed partnerships as institutional cooperation, the AGS model integrates local economic potential, learner characteristics, tutor involvement, and business-sector needs into a single operational framework. This integration constitutes the primary novelty of the study.

3.3 Develop Stage: Validation and Limited Trial

The AGS Partnership Model had limited field testing and expert validation during the Develop stage. PKBM practitioners, non-formal education specialists, and local business leaders carried out the validation. The model may be implemented with a few small changes, according on the validation

findings. Feedback primarily concerned the clarification of stakeholder roles, monitoring procedures, and partnership documentation.

Table 2. Validation Results of the Partnership Guidebook

No.	Validator	Suggestions, Comments, and Feedback	Conclusion
1	Content Expert (Dr. Mohamad Zubaidi, M.Pd.)	1. The title on the guidebook cover should be revised to "AGS Partnership Guidebook Based on the Local Economy." 2. Language editing and proofreading are needed in several sections of the guidebook to improve clarity, ensure consistency of terminology, and reduce writing errors that are still present.	Appropriate for use with revisions
2	Layout Expert (Dr. Rustam Husain, M.Pd.)	1. The cover should include an image that illustrates a local economy-based partnership. 2. Remove images that are not relevant to the content. 3. Each chapter should include illustrations, partnership flowcharts, or partnership implementation steps.	Appropriate for use with revisions
3	Language Expert (Dr. Muslimin, S.Pd., M.Pd.)	1. Revise spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. 2. Improve paragraph structure and coherence.	Appropriate for use with revisions
4	Practitioner (Bambang Mohamad Dandu, S.Pd.)	1. Measurable indicators of success should be included in the guidebook.	Appropriate for use with revisions

The model's applicability and execution in the context of work-skills learning at Community Learning Centers (PKBM) were then assessed in a small-scale field study. The next section presents the restricted trial's findings.

Table 3. Key Outcomes of the Limited Trial

Responden	K1	K2	K3	T4	T5	T6	T7	M8	M9	M10	Total Score
R1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	11
R2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	12
R3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	11
R4	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
R5	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	12
R6	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	11
R7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
R8	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
R9	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	12
R10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	11
R11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
R12	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
R13	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
R14	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	12
R15	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	11
Total											168

Based on the data above, the questionnaire assessment results from 15 participants showed a variation in total scores ranging from 10 to 12. The overall score obtained from all respondents was 168. When averaged, the participants' questionnaire score reached 11.20, which is equivalent to 1.12 per indicator.

Mean Formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{n}$$

Where :

$\bar{x}$ = Mean Score

$\sum xi$ = Total Score Obtained

n = Number Of Participant

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{n} = \frac{168}{15} = 11,2$$

This means that the average initial competency score of participants in the small-scale trial was 11.20 out of the maximum possible score. When calculated per indicator, the average score was only 1.12. This result indicates that the participants' initial competency level was still categorized as very low.

Table 4. Criteria for Small-Scale Trial Achievement

Average Score per Indicator	Competency Category
1.00 – 1.49	Very Low
1.50 – 2.49	Low
2.50 – 3.49	High
3.50 – 4.00	Very High

These findings indicate that prior to the implementation of the developed partnership model, collaboration among the Community Learning Centers (PKBM), local businesses, and other relevant stakeholders had not been functioning optimally. The low scores obtained by the participants suggest that the core partnership principles namely equity in decision-making, transparency in information sharing, and mutualism in obtaining shared benefits had not been fully experienced by all parties involved.

This finding highlights the importance of implementing the proposed partnership model. Without such intervention, the quality of collaboration among stakeholders would likely remain at a relatively low level. Therefore, the average score of 11.20 not only represents a statistical result but also reflects the actual field conditions, indicating that partnerships still require substantial strengthening in terms of equity, transparency, and mutualism.

To enhance stakeholder engagement, increase information availability, define roles and duties, and provide additional advantages for PKBM, local companies, and students, a more organised partnership model is thus required. The results of this questionnaire assessment provide an important baseline for refining and improving the partnership model before its implementation in the subsequent trial stage.

Following model development, validation was conducted by experts in non-formal education, language, layout design, and practitioners. Feedback focused on improving language consistency, visual presentation, partnership illustrations, and measurable indicators of success. After revisions, the model was considered suitable for implementation.

Thereafter, a small experiment with 15 individuals was carried out. The average score was 11.20 or 1.12, indicating a total score of 168. Based on the predetermined criteria, this score was categorized as very low, indicating that partnership practices before the implementation of the AGS model were still weak.

The limited-trial findings demonstrate that equity, transparency, and mutualism had not yet been fully experienced by stakeholders. This condition reinforces Tennyson's partnership theory, which argues that sustainable partnerships require balanced participation, openness, and mutual benefits among partners. The findings also support UNESCO's perspective on non-formal education, emphasizing that effective skill-development programs depend on strong stakeholder engagement and collaborative learning environments.

The low baseline score further justified the need for a structured partnership model to improve collaboration quality and strengthen work-skills learning.

3.4 Dissemination Stage

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and a large-scale field experiment including PKBM managers, tutors, local business players, and local government officials were used to carry out the Disseminate stage. These activities aimed to introduce the developed model and gather feedback regarding its potential for broader implementation. The large-scale trial's outcomes are shown below:

Table 5. Results of the Large-Scale Questionnaire Assessment

Responden	K1	K2	K3	T4	T5	T6	T7	M8	M9	M10	Total Score
R1	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	33
R2	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	34
R3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	37
R4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	30
R5	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	37
R6	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	35
R7	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	34
R8	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	38
R9	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	38
R10	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	32
R11	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	34
R12	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	36
R13	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	35
R14	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	39
R15	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	32
Total											524

Based on the questionnaire results after the implementation of the PKBM partnership model, the scores of the 15 respondents ranged from 30 to 39. The total score obtained was 524, with a mean score of 34.93. This result indicates that participants achieved an average score of 3.5 per indicator on a four-point scale, reflecting a high level of partnership implementation across the assessed dimensions.

Mean Formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{n}$$

Where :

$\bar{x}$ = Mean Score

$\sum xi$ = Total Score Obtained

n = Number Of Participant

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{n} = \frac{524}{15} = 34,93$$

The findings demonstrate that most participants responded positively to the implementation of the partnership model. The high mean scores indicate that the core partnership principles—equity, transparency, and mutualism—were successfully embedded in the collaboration process and experienced by the participating stakeholders. Respondents perceived greater equality in decision-making, improved openness in information sharing, and stronger mutual benefits among PKBM, local businesses, and other partners.

Furthermore, when compared with the pre-implementation condition, the results reveal a marked improvement across all assessed dimensions. This suggests that the developed partnership model contributed significantly to strengthening stakeholder collaboration, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of partnership-based programs.

Table 6. Criteria for Small-Scale Trial Achievement

Average Score per Indicator	Competency Category
1.00 – 1.49	Very Low
1.50 – 2.49	Low
2.50 – 3.49	High
3.50 – 4.00	Very High

The Disseminate stage was conducted through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and a large-scale trial involving PKBM managers, tutors, local business actors, and local government representatives. The purpose was to introduce the AGS model and evaluate its broader applicability.

Results from the large-scale trial showed a total score of 524 from 15 respondents, with a mean score of 34.93 or approximately 3.5 per indicator. This result falls within the very high category and indicates a substantial improvement compared to the limited-trial results.

Participants reported stronger collaboration, improved information transparency, clearer role distribution, and greater mutual benefits among stakeholders. The increase from an average score of 1.12 per indicator in the limited trial to 3.5 in the large-scale trial suggests that the AGS model effectively strengthened partnership quality and stakeholder engagement.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the importance of developing a structured, local economy-based partnership model to strengthen collaboration and support work-skills development in Community Learning Centers (PKBM). The development of the AGS Partnership Model, incorporating Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism, responds to the need for more participatory, accountable, and mutually beneficial relationships among non-formal education institutions, local governments, business actors, and learners. The model provides an operational framework for connecting educational activities with local economic opportunities, particularly in fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing. This approach is consistent with Tennyson's (2005) partnership principles, which emphasize equity, transparency, and mutual benefit as essential foundations of sustainable collaboration.

The needs assessment revealed that 17 of 38 learners (44.7%) had neither secured employment nor established independent businesses after completing their educational programs. This finding suggests that existing training activities may not have been sufficiently connected to local employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Furthermore, limited learner participation, weak coordination with business actors, and the absence of formal partnership mechanisms indicated institutional challenges requiring systematic intervention. These findings align with the OECD (2023), which emphasizes the importance of aligning education and training systems with changing labor-market demands. From a community development perspective, Ife (2013) argues that empowerment requires meaningful

participation, access to resources, and opportunities for communities to influence decisions affecting their development.

The AGS Partnership Model addresses these challenges by integrating three complementary partnership dimensions. Access Equality promotes balanced stakeholder participation in planning, implementation, and decision-making. Governance Transparency emphasizes accessible information, clearly defined responsibilities, and accountable partnership management. Synergy Mutualism encourages reciprocal contributions and shared benefits among participating stakeholders. These dimensions reflect Tennyson's (2005) partnership framework and are consistent with the collaborative governance perspective of Ansell and Gash (2008), who identify inclusive participation, trust building, and shared understanding as important conditions for effective collaboration. The contribution of the AGS model lies in translating these established principles into a contextual framework for partnerships between PKBM institutions and local economic actors.

The development process also demonstrated the importance of systematic validation and stakeholder feedback in producing an applicable educational model. Expert assessments identified necessary improvements in the partnership guidebook, particularly regarding language clarity, visual presentation, implementation procedures, and measurable indicators of success. These recommendations informed revisions intended to improve the guidebook's usability. This iterative process is consistent with the Four-D development framework proposed by Thiagarajan et al. (1974), which emphasizes systematic product development and refinement. Nevertheless, the qualitative validation decisions primarily establish preliminary feasibility and do not independently demonstrate the model's effectiveness in improving learners' vocational competencies.

The questionnaire assessments showed a substantial descriptive difference between the initial and subsequent evaluations of partnership practices. The initial assessment involving 15 respondents produced an average score of 1.12 per indicator, categorized as very low, whereas the subsequent assessment involving 15 respondents produced an average of approximately 3.50, categorized as very high. These results suggest more favorable stakeholder perceptions of equality, transparency, and mutual benefits following the introduction of the AGS model. However, because the available data do not establish whether both assessments involved identical respondents or equivalent evaluation conditions, the observed difference should not be interpreted as definitive causal evidence of model effectiveness.

The relevance of local economic integration further strengthens the practical significance of the model. By positioning fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing as potential contexts for vocational learning, the AGS framework offers opportunities to establish more responsive relationships between training providers and local enterprises. This orientation is consistent with Suminar et al. (2024), who examined partnership-based life-skills training and graduate competencies, and Widodo et al. (2024), who explored entrepreneurship-oriented non-formal education development. Nevertheless, the present study did not directly measure occupational performance, employment transitions, or entrepreneurial outcomes. Therefore, its contribution should primarily be understood as strengthening the institutional conditions that may support future work-skills development.

Theoretically, this study contributes to non-formal education by operationalizing established partnership principles within a locally contextualized educational development framework. Practically, the AGS model offers PKBM managers and local stakeholders a structured reference for coordinating responsibilities, improving communication, and connecting educational planning with economic opportunities. However, the findings are limited by the involvement of only two PKBM institutions, relatively small questionnaire samples, and reliance on stakeholder perceptions. Future research should employ clearly documented longitudinal or comparative designs, validated work-skills assessments, and employment-related indicators to establish whether improved partnership practices translate into measurable learner outcomes. Such evidence would strengthen the model's contribution to sustainable vocational education and community empowerment.

4. CONCLUSION

This study developed the AGS Partnership Model (Access Equality, Governance Transparency, and Synergy Mutualism) as a local economy-based partnership framework to strengthen stakeholder collaboration and support work-skills development in Community Learning Centers (PKBM). The main findings revealed that the model provides a structured approach to integrating local government, PKBM management, business actors, and learners through equitable participation, transparent governance, and mutually beneficial collaboration. Expert validation indicated that the model was suitable for implementation with revisions, while questionnaire assessments showed an increase in average partnership scores from 1.12 in the initial assessment to approximately 3.50 following implementation, suggesting improved stakeholder perceptions of partnership quality. These findings highlight the potential of the AGS model to strengthen institutional collaboration and align non-formal education programs with local economic opportunities, particularly in fisheries, agriculture, and local product processing. However, this study was limited to two PKBM institutions in Bunta District, involved relatively small questionnaire samples, and primarily assessed stakeholder perceptions rather than directly measuring improvements in learners' vocational competencies or employment outcomes. Furthermore, the evaluation design did not establish a definitive causal relationship between model implementation and changes in partnership quality. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, employ longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs, and incorporate validated assessments of vocational competencies, employment transitions, entrepreneurship development, and income generation. Further investigation into the model's adaptability across different socioeconomic contexts is also recommended to establish its broader effectiveness, sustainability, and contribution to community-based vocational education.

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