

## The Family Based Pedagogy: Building Learner Trust and Motivation through Sibling Like Tutor Relationships at PKBM RUMAN Aceh

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**Abstract:** Many learners in equivalence education programs enter the system carrying heavy academic trauma, insecurity, and a general distrust of formal schooling authorities. This study explores a unique pedagogical approach utilized at PKBM RUMAN Aceh, where tutors intentionally dismantle traditional teacher and student hierarchies to foster a family based ecosystem. Using a descriptive qualitative method, data were gathered through participant observations, comprehensive interviews, and document analysis involving tutors, institutional administrators, and learners who previously dropped out of formal schools. The findings reveal that tutors position themselves as older siblings rather than authoritative figures. This sibling like relationship is established through informal communication styles, empathetic listening, and the removal of rigid academic formalities. Consequently, this egalitarian approach significantly lowers learners affective filters and academic anxiety. The study concludes that family based pedagogy is not merely a communication preference but a crucial psychological intervention. It effectively rebuilds learner trust, heals past academic traumas, and restores intrinsic motivation, proving that humanizing the educational space is the most vital foundation for nonformal education success.

**Keywords:** Family Based Pedagogy, Learner Trust, Academic Motivation, Nonformal Education, Humanistic Approach, PKBM RUMAN Aceh

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### INTRODUCTION

The landscape of nonformal education, particularly equivalence programs such as Junior High School Equivalence Program and Senior High School Equivalence Program, is fundamentally different from regular formal schools. Learners in these programs often carry complex psychological baggage. A significant portion of these individuals are victims of bullying, strict disciplinary actions, or academic labeling that led to their dropout status from the formal schooling system. Consequently, they often develop a strong defense mechanism and a deep distrust toward educational institutions and authority figures (Yuliana, 2023). When they finally decide to return to school through a Community Learning Center or PKBM, applying the same rigid and authoritative teaching style will inevitably trigger their past traumas and lead to a secondary dropout.

Understanding this fragile psychological state is crucial for educators. In traditional formal settings, the relationship between a teacher and a student is heavily hierarchical. The

teacher is positioned as the absolute authority, while the student is the subordinate receiver of knowledge. However, PKBM RUMAN Aceh adopts a radically different approach to break this barrier. The institution implements what can be described as a family based pedagogy. Tutors consciously strip away their authoritative titles and formal teaching personas, opting instead to build a sibling-like relationship with their learners. This egalitarian environment aims to humanize the learning process, making the classroom feel like a supportive family gathering rather than a rigid academic evaluation room.

While existing literature extensively covers instructional methodologies and curriculum management in nonformal education, the socio emotional dynamics between tutors and learners remain underrepresented. Studies by Sari and Hidayat (2024) have touched upon humanistic communication, yet they rarely detail how informal, family like relationships directly reconstruct a shattered academic motivation. There is a noticeable gap in understanding the practical mechanisms of how dismantling the teacher student hierarchy can serve as a primary psychological intervention for traumatized learners.

Therefore, this study is designed to explore and analyze the implementation of family based pedagogy at PKBM RUMAN Aceh. The research formulates the problem of how tutors establish siblings like relationships with diverse learners and how this specific social dynamic impacts the learners trust and intrinsic motivation. By dissecting this humanistic approach, the study aims to provide a proven psychological framework for other nonformal educational institutions struggling with learner retention and engagement.

## **METHODS**

This research utilized a qualitative approach with a descriptive analytical design. This specific methodology was selected because it allows researchers to deeply investigate social interactions, emotional dynamics, and human behaviors within their natural educational setting (Creswell, 2021). The study was conducted at PKBM RUMAN Aceh in Banda Aceh, focusing on the Junior High School Equivalence Program and Senior High School Equivalence Program equivalence programs.

Primary data collection occurred between February and May 2026. The researchers employed three main data gathering techniques. First, participant observation was conducted to monitor the daily interactions, communication styles, and emotional climate inside and outside the classrooms. Second, comprehensive interviews were carried out with the institution director, three active tutors, and six learners. The learner informants were purposively selected based on their history of dropping out from formal schools due to academic trauma. Third, document analysis was utilized to review institutional guidelines regarding tutor conduct and learner attendance records.

The data gathered from the field were processed using an interactive analysis framework. This procedure involved data reduction to isolate key themes regarding trust building and motivation, narrative thematic data display, and drawing final conclusions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2021). To ensure the credibility and accuracy of the findings, the researchers applied source triangulation. This was done by cross checking the tutors pedagogical claims with the actual emotional experiences narrated by the learners during the interviews.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The implementation of family based pedagogy at PKBM RUMAN Aceh begins with the intentional dismantling of traditional academic hierarchies. Interview results with the tutors revealed that learners entering the equivalence program usually exhibit strong defense mechanisms. They are often intimidated by the concept of a teacher because their past experiences associate the figure with punishment, judgment, and failure. To counter this, tutors at RUMAN Aceh refuse to position themselves as authoritative figures. They introduce themselves using familiar and informal terms, encouraging learners to address them as older brothers or older sisters rather than using formal academic titles. This simple linguistic shift

instantly neutralizes the intimidating classroom atmosphere. Observations confirmed that the physical arrangement of the learning space also reflects this egalitarian philosophy. Tutors rarely stand behind a formal desk. Instead, they sit in circles alongside the learners, sharing the same physical and psychological level. This approach aligns with the core principles of care ethics in education, which emphasizes that meaningful learning can only occur when students feel genuinely cared for as human beings (Noddings, 2015). By acting as older siblings, tutors effectively lower the learners affective filters, allowing them to absorb information without the looming fear of making mistakes.

Furthermore, this sibling like relationship serves as the foundation for rebuilding learner trust. In formal schools, communication is mostly unidirectional and strictly confined to academic topics. At PKBM RUMAN Aceh, the communication is highly fluid and deeply empathetic. Tutors actively listen to the learners personal struggles, ranging from workplace difficulties to family issues, before starting the academic modules (Sari & Hidayat, 2024). During the interviews, learners expressed that they feel safe in this environment. One of the learners who had a history of severe bullying in a regular high school stated that the tutors at RUMAN Aceh do not judge their intellectual capacity. If a learner fails to understand a mathematical concept, the tutor does not respond with anger or labeling. Instead, the tutor approaches the problem with patience, much like an older sibling helping a younger one with homework. This profound sense of psychological safety encourages learners to be transparent about their academic weaknesses without the fear of humiliation. The trust built through these daily, informal interactions acts as a psychological bridge, connecting the traumatized learners back to the world of education.

The direct consequence of this restored trust is a massive surge in intrinsic academic motivation. Prior to joining RUMAN Aceh, many learners viewed studying as a coercive and painful obligation. However, the family based pedagogy completely alters this perception. Because the learners feel respected and valued as equal human beings, their motivation shifts from avoiding punishment to seeking personal growth (Rogers, 1983). Attendance records analyzed during the study showed a remarkably high retention rate among learners who previously had chronic absenteeism in formal schools. They attend the equivalence classes not because they are forced by a rigid system, but because they genuinely look forward to meeting their supportive tutors. The tutors successfully transform the educational process into a collaborative journey of self improvement. This finding strongly indicates that in the context of nonformal education, emotional healing and trust building must precede cognitive instruction. When learners feel that they belong to a supportive academic family, their motivation to learn and succeed naturally follows.

## **CONCLUSION**

The family based pedagogy implemented at PKBM RUMAN Aceh proves that emotional connection is the most powerful catalyst for academic reengagement. By intentionally breaking down the traditional, rigid hierarchy between teachers and students, tutors successfully position themselves as supportive older siblings. This egalitarian and empathetic approach effectively neutralizes the academic anxiety and trauma that equivalence learners often bring from their past schooling experiences. The sibling like relationship fosters a deep sense of psychological safety, which in turn rebuilds the learners trust in educational institutions. Consequently, this restored trust directly translates into high intrinsic motivation, completely shifting the learners perspective on studying from a painful obligation to a joyful journey of self improvement. This study strongly recommends that other nonformal educational institutions prioritize humanistic, family like interactions over strict academic formalities. For marginalized learners, experiencing a classroom that feels like a safe family environment is the fundamental prerequisite for achieving lifelong educational success.

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