

Improving Graphic Design Competence Through an Internship at a Community Learning Center

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Abstract

Background – Community Learning Centers (CLCs) play an important role in equipping learners with practical skills needed for employment, particularly for those who transition directly into the workforce after completing their education. In this context, internship programs can help bridge classroom learning and workplace demands, especially in skill based such as graphic design.

Research Urgency – Internship programs within CLCs are pivotal in bridging the gap between classroom instruction and professional requirements. Systematic evaluation of these programs, particularly in the field of graphic design becomes essential to make certain that graduates' competencies meet nationally recognized standards.

Research Objectives – This study aims to evaluate the development of graphic design competencies among CLC learners participating in an internship program during the 2022-2023 academic year.

Research Method – The study employed a non-experimental quantitative design using descriptive statistical analysis. The participants were 20 learners at a Community Learning Center in Depok City, West Java, Indonesia. Data were collected using self-assessment and rubric-based competency assessment adapted from the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI 2023-126) for graphic design.

Research Findings – The results indicate positive changes in learners' graphic design competence after participating in the internship program. Across all assessed performance criteria, the number of participants categorized as competent increased after the internship, particularly in software selection, project-based design execution, use of software features, and production of design outputs suitable for screen or print. These findings suggest that the internship program was associated with improved competency performance in graphic design.

Research Conclusion – The internship program appears to provide meaningful practical learning opportunities for CLC learners and to support the development of graphic design competence aligned with workplace-oriented standards.

Research Novelty/Contribution – This study offers practical insights into how SKKNI-based internship assessment can be applied in nonformal education settings to support competency development and strengthen the work readiness of CLC learners.

Keywords: internship program; graphic design competency; lifeskills development; community learning center.

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INTRODUCTION

Community Learning Centres (CLCs) play an important role in promoting lifelong learning, community empowerment, and inclusive access to education, especially for marginalized groups and non-formal learners (UIL, 2023; Yang, 2022; Rogers, 2023). In addition to expanding educational access, CLCs also contribute to workforce readiness through skill-oriented training and partnerships with local industries (Borkowska & Osborne, 2023; Milana & McBain, 2022). Furthermore, work-integrated learning and internship programs are widely recognized as effective mechanisms for bridging the gap between academic learning and labor market demands (Jackson et al., 2022; Silva et al., 2023). Studies show that structured internships enhance employability skills, professional identity, and workplace adaptability among learners (Bennett, Knight, & Rowley, 2021; Hora, Parrott, & Her, 2020). In Indonesia, The Community Learning Activity Center (CLC) serve as alternative educations that are established from, by and for the community with the aim of developing potential through the formation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in response to local needs (Artha, Yulianingsih, Widodo, & Cahyani, 2023; Wahyudin, 2015). Evaluating to this situation, equipping within modern technology in a setting place of a Community Learning Centre (CLC) is a way to improve education for all ages. (Thongdee et al., 2022).

The Community Learning Activity Center (CLC), furthermore, showed awareness of the benefits of education through efforts to educate children and the government encouraged the establishment of community learning centers as an alternative to education. (Wahyudin, 2015). In this context, CLC aims to provide access to education to children who are not yet in school, illiterate, unmet educational needs in formal education, and school-age children who do not have access to education (Suarno, Suryono, Zamroni, Irmansyah, & Yasin, 2022). Thus, Community learning centers provide a means to complete compulsory education and increase educational participation rates in Indonesia. (Sucipto, Wiyono, Rasyad, Dayati, & Purwito, 2021). The educational programs in CLC encompasses functional literacy initiatives, equivalency programs, business study circles, establishment of internship programs, and skill-oriented courses (Sucipto et al., 2021).

One important way in which CLCs can strengthen learners' work readiness is through internship programs. Internship-based learning is widely recognized as an effective approach for connecting educational experiences with workplace demands. Previous studies have shown that internship can support the development of employability skills, workplace adaptability, professional identity and career awareness among learners (Kapareliotis et al., 2019; Bennett et al., 2021; Hora et al., 2020; Jackson et al., 2022; Silva et al., 2023). Aligned to the learning processes, internships programmes integrated into the curriculum and those beyond the regular coursework, within additional activities outside the formal curriculum, were considered essential for improving job prospects. (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021). In addition, Internships can also provide opportunities for learners to apply classroom knowledge in authentic settings and to gain direct exposure to job expectations, work culture and performance standards (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021; Zehr & Korte, 2020). For non-formal education institutions such as CLCs, internship programs therefore have the potential to become an important mechanism for preparing learners to enter the labor market more confidently and competently.

Another studies indicated that internships positively influenced students' personal and interpersonal abilities, including self-confidence, vocational self-perception, awareness of career options, independence, and a positive sense of citizenship (Zehr & Korte, 2020). Social work educators and their academic institutions are encouraged to explore this environment for internship and employment prospects, fostering the advancement of both professions and collaborative relationships between them. (Jones et al., 2020).

This need is particularly relevant also in the field of graphic design. Graphic design has the capability to transform intricate scientific concepts into a visual language (Zaelzer, 2020). Graphic design has become increasingly important in the contemporary economy because visual communication skills are widely needed across business, marketing, media, and digital content industries. At the same time, the field is undergoing rapid transformation due to advances in digital technology and artificial intelligence, which require learners to develop not only technical software skills but also adaptive and creative competencies (Huda et al., 2021; Li & Tang, 2022). Graphic designer is a job that is much needed today in the business world in the community. The application of augmented reality technology serves as a supplementary tool for acquiring graphic design skills, addressing the demands of learning in the context of the fourth industrial revolution. (Huda et al., 2021). Prior research has also shown that graphic design learning can be enhanced through practice-based and project-based approaches that improve both technical proficiency and learner engagement (Sumantri et al., 2022). The findings indicated a notable enhancement in both the graphic design proficiency and active learning of

students, following the implementation of the Maker-Centered Project-Based Learning Model, with a confidence level of 95%. (Sumantri, Gandana, Supriatna, Iasha, & Setiawan, 2022). These developments indicate that graphic design competence is not only relevant as an educated skills but also increasingly important for employability in digitally mediated work environments.

Despite the recognize value of internships and the growing importance of graphic design skills, internship implementation in CLC settings remains insufficiently developed. The introduction texts indicate that many internship programs are held but have not been optimally carried out and that structured program design is still needed. Social work educators and their academic institutions are encouraged to investigate internship and employment possibilities in this environment. Such exploration can contribute to the advancement of both professions and foster collaborative partnerships between them. (Jones et al., 2020). Thus, a manager of a Community Learning Center (CLC) should have the capacity to oversee various programs within the community, ensuring their efficient operation. These programs encompass functional literacy initiatives, equivalency programs, business study groups, the establishment of internship programs, and skills courses. (Sucipto et al., 2021). Without a significant boost in supporting CLC as alternative education for all, particularly in terms of financial backing, the dedication to providing lifelong learning opportunities for all may be compromised. (Belete, Duke, Hinzen, Owusu-Boampong, & Khau, 2022).

Research conducted in Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Uzbekistan, and Viet Nam has underscored the importance of obtaining formal policy recognition as a key strategy for maximizing the advantages and impact of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) (Kasaju, 2008). There are some researches that findings from textual analysis using triangulation indicate that, while those shaping these initiatives such as policymakers, teachers, and leaders acknowledge the overall significance of Education for Sustainability Development (ESD), their focus is primarily on the formulation of particular projects and curricula. Conversely, students actively participating in ESD activities perceive social educational facilities (local community center, community learning center) as "vibrant" and "inspiring" (Oe, Yamaoka, & Ochiai, 2022). At the same time, workers with graphic design competence are still considered limited in relation to labour market needs. This suggests a practical gap between the role expected of CLCs in preparing learners for work and the actual quality or structure of internship-based competency development currently available. In particular, there is a need for internship programs that are not only practice-oriented, but also aligned with clear competency standards and assessment criteria.

Another important issue concerns assessment and program quality. Internship experiences are often valued because they provide hands-on learning, yet the absence of a well-designed pedagogical structure remains a common criticism of internships as a learning method (Hermann et al., 2021). In the context of nonformal education, this challenge is even more significant because programs must demonstrate that practical learning activities lead to measurable competency development. For graphic design training in CLCs, the use of competency-based standards is therefore important to ensure that internship outcomes are relevant to workplace expectations and can be evaluated systematically. In general, CLC has not yet implemented such a good internship program. This data was gathered exclusively from individuals who were chosen and opted to take part in the internship initiative. (Maker, 2020). An internship has been utilized on numerous occasions to enhance the professional experiences of employees. (Assinger, 2023). Academic institutions are urged to investigate internship and employment possibilities in this environment. This exploration will contribute to the advancement of both professions and the collaboration between them. (Jones et al., 2020). Internships integrated into the curriculum and additional non-curricular internships, along with extracurricular activities, were considered crucial for boosting employability. Internships arranged as extracurricular activities were rated more favorably compared to those provided through work-integrated learning. (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021)

However, workers who have graphic design competence are still limited / have not met the needs of the job market. As graphic design thinking is aided by sketching to formulate design concepts, it may be connected to the generation of innovative design ideas. (Tsai et al., 2021). In accordance with semiotic theory, the visual elements and graphic design of labels play a pivotal role in conveying information and shaping beliefs that influence decision-making (Proi, Dudinskaya, Naspetti, Ozturk, & Zanolli, 2023). Women achieved higher average scores in adherence to intellectual property rights in music, proficiency in graphic design, regular utilization of image editors, expertise in presentation and formatting using word processors, and familiarity with social media platforms. (Grande-De-prado, Cañón, García-Martín, & Cantón, 2020). Such tools such as computer graphic design software enables a creative instructional approach that permits unrestricted experimentation, adjustments, reversals, and reproductions in makeup design. This innovation transforms the traditional teaching of makeup design that has remained static (Hsu, Wu, Cho, & Wang, 2021).

In accordance to this situation, it is necessary for Community Learning Centres to design an internship program to improve graphic design competence in their community learning. Internships establish opportunities for hands-on training and are considered a crucial factor in improving employability. They assist graduates in acquiring the job-related skills sought by employers (Januszewski & Grzeszczak, 2021). Numerous students engaged in cooperative programs view internships as the most effective approach to transition into their chosen careers (Nogueira, Magano, Fontão, Sousa, & Leite, 2021). Students can acquire more substantial knowledge and exposure by engaging in international industrial internships, as these experiences entail current real-world manufacturing involvement. (Tan & Umemoto, 2021). Having excelled in the internship program, it illustrates that students from diverse cultures can thrive in advanced educational programs. (Maker, 2020). The absence of a comprehensive design for the internship experience and its pedagogical components is a well-recognized critique of internships as a learning method (Hermann, Amaral, & Bossle, 2021).

Internship programs that improve competence provide more value so that they are more acceptable in the job market. Although internship employment programs can serve as an effective means to recruit a diverse workforce, they are not solely enough to address the overall diversity gap in the workforce (Dockry et al., 2022). Internship initiatives within startup environments have the potential to be advantageous for all parties involved: students, educational institutions, and companies (Maaravi, Heller, Hochman, & Kanat-Maymon, 2021). We take into account a wider range of potential internships and educational opportunities that are accessible. (Chow-Garcia et al., 2022). Traditional internships followed a rather broad framework in their execution, with tasks assigned to students varying based on the specific organization to which the student was placed. (Januszewski & Grzeszczak, 2021).

Against this background, the present study focuses on the development of graphic design competence through an internship program implemented at a Community Learning Center in Depok City, Indonesia. This study is important because it addresses the need to strengthen work-oriented learning in nonformal education while also responding to the growing demand for graphic design competence in the labour market. More specifically, the study examines learners' competency development based on performance criteria derived from the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards. In doing so, it seeks to provide practical evidence on how internship-based learning can support competency development in CLC settings and contribute to learners' work readiness.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative design with descriptive statistical analysis to examine the development of graphic design competence among Community Learning Center (CLC) learners who participated in an internship program. A descriptive approach was selected because the study aimed to document learners' competency performance before and after the internship rather than to test causal effects through experimental manipulation. The study was conducted during the 2022-2023 academic year and was grounded in the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) 2023-126 as the gathering data rubric assessment developed by minister of Labour of Indonesia, specifically Unit Code M.74DV13.010.3 as the reference framework for competency assessment. The use of competency-based assessment rubrics aligns with contemporary approaches in vocational and professional education, which emphasize measurable learning outcomes and authentic skill evaluation (Mulder, 2022; Boud & Soler, 2023). Rubric-based assessment has been widely applied in internship and work-integrated learning research to ensure reliability, transparency, and consistency in evaluating learners' professional competencies (Ferns, Russell, & Smith, 2022; Jackson et al., 2022).

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at a Community Learning Center in Depok City, West java, Indonesia. The participants were 20 CLC learners enrolled in the graphic design internship program. The sample consisted of 12 male and 8 female participants. In terms of age, 4 participants were 10-14 years old, and 16 participants were 14-18 years old. Participants were included in the study because they took part in the internship program during the period of the study. Participants were selected using sampling technique to be specified by the author. The inclusion criteria for participation were inclusion criteria to be specified by the author, while the

exclusion criteria were exclusion criteria to be specified by the author-not mentioned. The participants criteria are described in the table. 1 below:

Table 1. Participant

Variabel	N
Gender:	
Male	12
Female	8
Age:	
10 – 14	4
14 – 18	16

Internship Program Context and Procedure

The internship program was designed to support the development of learners' graphic design competence in a workplace-oriented learning environment at the CLC. The program was implemented for about 1 year academic of 2022-2023. During the internship, learners engaged in activities related to the use of graphic design software, the execution of design tasks based on project needs, and the production of outputs suitable for screen or print media, in line with the competency elements assessed in the study. The internship activities were supervised by CLC instructors. Add furthermore about additional information regarding the structure of the internship, the frequency of meetings and the mentoring processes as well as the sequences of learning tasks that should be specified in the final manuscript to strengthen procedural clarity and replicability, In contrast to these are not mentioned before in the context.

Instruments

Data were collected using self-assessments and rubric-based competency assessment. The competency rubric was based on SKKNI 2023-126 issued by the Ministry of Indonesia Labour and was used to assess learners' achievement in graphic design competence. The use of a competency-based rubric is appropriate for internship-based learning because it enables the evaluation of performance using explicit and workplace-oriented criteria. The assessment covered two elements of competence and seven elements of performance criteria.

The first element concerned the ability to select appropriate design software including (1) identifying types or software commonly used in design processes according to their functions; (2) explaining the advantages, limitations, and benefits of each type of software through sample works; and (3) determining the most suitable software based on project needs. The second element concerned the ability to use graphic design software effectively and efficiently, including (1) creating and managing work documents sequentially, such as creating, naming and saving files,; (2) producing digital works based on design sketches using the software; (3) demonstrating software features as needed in the production process; and (4) producing outputs with appropriate quality for screen or print use. The self-assessment instrument therefore was used to capture learners' perceptions of their own competency achievement, whereas the rubric-based assessment was used to evaluate observable performance on each criterion. The rubric was completed by assessor identity specified by the author, if it is more than one assessor was involved, the number of assessors, the qualifications, and the scoring procedure should be reported explicitly in the final version of the manuscript. The instruments are elaborated as the description in the table 2 below:

Table 2. Elements of Competence

Elements of competence	Performance criteria
Choosing a breed software Proper design	1. Types of software that commonly used in processes Design categorized by their respective uses. 2. Advantages, disadvantages and benefits of each type of software that used demonstrated by comprehensive through sample works. 3. The most suitable software determined based on needs project.
Demonstrate The potential of the device	1. The process of creating a work document operationalized sequentially starting from creating, naming and record documents as directed.

soft design in a manner effective and efficient	2. Creation of digital works based on sketch of the work designed using the Software as directed. 3. Features in the software Demonstrated as needed creation of works. 4. Works from software ensured in accordance with quality optimal for screens or prints
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Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was carried out in relation to learners' participation in the internship program. Learners' competencies were assessed at two points, namely before and after the internship. Before the internship, participants completed the self-assessment and were evaluated using the competency rubric to establish their initial performance profile. After completing the internship, the same competency criteria were used to assess their post-internship performance. For reporting purposes, learners' performance on each criterion was summarized into two categories, namely competent and not competent.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques. The analysis focused on the frequency distribution of participants categorized as competent and not competent for each performance criterion before and after the internship. These frequencies were then compared to describe patterns of competency development across the assessed dimensions. The results were presented in tabular form to show changes in learners' performance on all seven criteria.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

These findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing that internship-based learning environments significantly contribute to the development of professional competencies and employability among learners (Silva et al., 2023; Bennett et al., 2021). In creative and digital industries, practical exposure through internships is particularly important because graphic design education increasingly requires integration of digital tools, creative problem-solving, and collaboration skills (Davis, 2023; Zhang & Chen, 2024). Moreover, the rapid transformation of the creative industries driven by digital technologies and artificial intelligence has expanded the demand for workers with strong visual communication and design thinking skills (Flew, 2021; McIntyre et al., 2022). Therefore, internship programs that combine competency-based assessment and real-world project experience can play a critical role in preparing learners to enter the evolving labour market.

With the internship program, it becomes a means of introducing CLC to the wider community. Internship at CLC (Community Learning Activity Centre) is not only an activity, but also an effective tool to introduce the role and benefits of CLC to the community. In its implementation, internships not only provide opportunities for participants to gain practical experience but also become a forum to understand more deeply about the education and training provided by CLC. During the internship at CLC, interns are not only involved in teaching and learning activities but also given a comprehensive overview of how CLC contributes to providing non-formal education to the community. Interns can see firsthand how CLC adapts to local needs, provides access to education to those in need, and creates an inclusive learning environment.

Internships at CLC are also an opportunity for participants to build networks and relationships with the local community. By being directly involved in CLC activities, interns can help strengthen community involvement, understand the social dynamics around them, and feel the positive impact generated by CLC programs. Thus, internships are not just practical learning, but also a means to introduce CLC as an agent of positive change in society. The internship program at CLC however is still limited for its quality and preparation programs, it should be adjusted by updating and upgrading. The internship program at CLC still looks outdated, and adjustments are needed through updates and improvements to be more relevant to the demands of the times. In responding to changes in the dynamics of education and community needs, it is necessary to update the internship content so that internship program can be skilled in facing the challenges of the growing world of work.

The renewal of the internship program at CLC can be started by integrating the latest technology and learning methods. The adoption of information technology in internship training can provide a more dynamic

learning experience and in accordance with current technological developments. In addition, it is also necessary to improve the quality of training materials to suit industry needs and provide in-depth understanding to interns. In addition to content updates, it is also necessary to pay attention to aspects of management and mentoring internships. Developing an effective mentoring program can help interns better develop skills and knowledge. Increased communication between CLC and internship places also needs to be improved so that optimal synergy occurs in supporting the development of interns. Thus, the renewal and improvement of the internship program at CLC is the key to answering the challenges of the times and making a maximum contribution to the development of apprentices' skills.

Table 3. Performance Criteria of Internship Participants

Performance Criteria	Before Internship		After Internship	
	Competence	Not Competence	Competence	Not Competence
Types of software that commonly used in processes Design categorized by their respective uses.	9	11	18	2
Advantages, disadvantages and benefits of each type of software that used demonstrated by comprehensive through sample works.	7	13	16	4
The most suitable software determined based on needs project.	8	12	19	1
The process of creating a work document operationalized sequentially starting from creating, naming and record documents as directed.	5	15	20	0
Creation of digital works based on sketch of the work designed using the Software as directed.	9	11	19	1
Features in the software Demonstrated as needed creation of works.	8	12	19	1
Works from software ensured in accordance with quality optimal for screens or prints	6	14	20	0

In accordance with providing excellent quality of the citizens' learning competence, CLC should facilitate by organizing an internship program. Community Learning Activity Center has a crucial role in equipping its learning citizens with competencies that are relevant to the needs of the world of work. One effective approach in this regard is to organize an internship program. The internship program not only provides opportunities for learning citizens to apply the knowledge gained during learning but also allows them to understand firsthand the dynamics and demands of the world of work. Through internship programs, learning citizens can develop practical skills that are highly valued in the job market. The process of direct learning in the field provides real experience that cannot be obtained through theoretical learning alone. In addition, the internship program also opens opportunities for learning residents to build professional networks that can support their future career development.

The facilitation of the internship program by CLC is not only about giving residents learning work experience but also making a positive contribution to local and community development. By engaging in real-world activities, learning citizens can become agents of change in the surrounding environment. Therefore, the implementation of the internship program by CLC is a strategic step to empower citizens to learn, improve the quality of human resources, and support holistic community development.

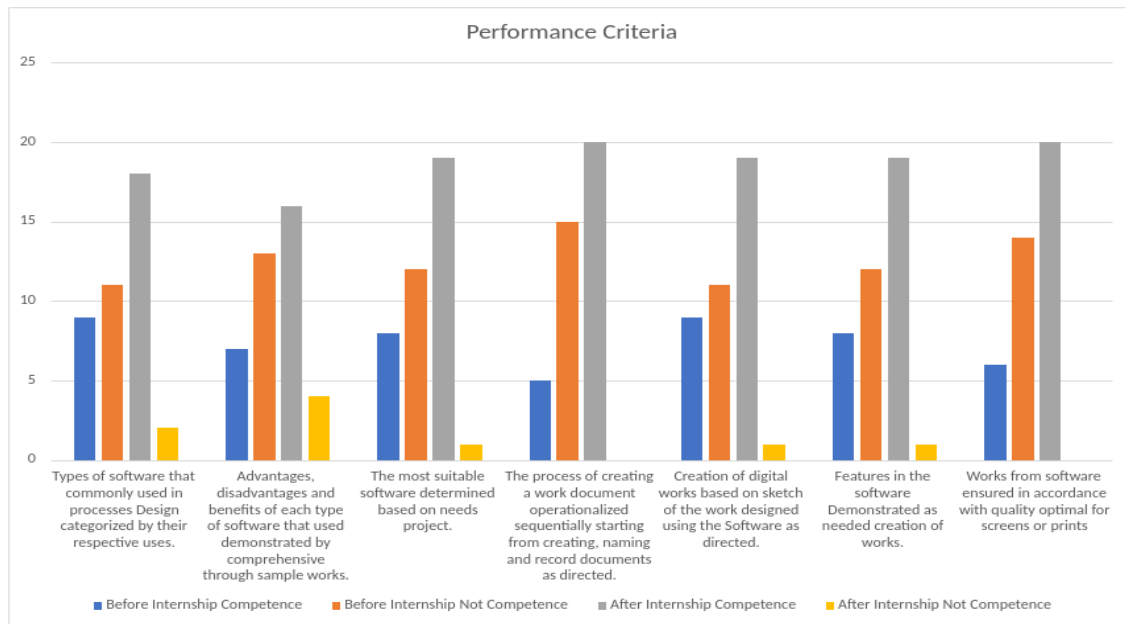


Figure 1. Performance Criteria

With the internship program, as an effort by CLC in dealing with the needs of the job market competent graphic design personnel. Community Learning Activity Centre can act as a balance between the needs of the labour market and the availability of competent labour through the implementation of internship programs. Especially in the context of graphic design, the presence of an internship program can provide a golden opportunity for CLC learning citizens to develop their graphic design skills directly in the industrial world. Thus, the internship program not only meets the job market's need for competent graphic design personnel but also provides practical experience that enriches citizens learning CLC.

The existence of an internship program at CLC has a positive impact not only for learning residents, but also for the business world and industry. Graphic design industry players can collaborate with CLC in guiding interns, ensuring that they understand the demands and industry standards. In addition, internship programs can create a better communication bridge between CLC and companies, resulting in more active involvement in shaping prospective workers who suit their needs. This step is in line with CLC's efforts to have a real impact in meeting the needs of the community and the job market holistically. By organizing an internship program, CLC not only creates opportunities for learning citizens to grow and develop professionally but also participates in increasing the competitiveness of the workforce in the field of graphic design. As a result, CLC is able to play a central role in supporting the development of competent human resources who are ready to enter the world of work.

CLC has implement internship for graphics design. Complementing the internship program, CLC more acknowledge by community. CLC has successfully implemented an internship program for graphics design, marking a significant stride towards enhancing its engagement with the community. This strategic initiative has not only provided valuable hands-on experience for aspiring graphic designers but has also contributed to CLC's growing recognition within the community. Through this internship program, CLC has become more acknowledged as a hub for fostering creative talent and providing practical opportunities for individuals to hone their skills. The program's success is evident in the positive feedback received from both interns and the broader community, solidifying CLC's position as a key player in nurturing and promoting excellence in graphics design. A CLC program manager must be able to accommodate all programs in the community and ensure that it runs effectively. The learning programs include functional literacy programs, equivalency programs, business study groups, development of internship programs, and skills courses (Sucipto et al., 2021).

Optimizing the internship program is paramount for fostering a dynamic learning environment, and one impactful way to achieve this is by organizing a specialized graphic design internship program. By tailoring the internship experience to focus on graphic design, participants can delve deeper into the intricacies of this

creative field, gaining hands-on experience and industry-specific skills. This targeted approach not only allows interns to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting but also ensures that they acquire a comprehensive understanding of graphic design principles. Moreover, organizing a graphic design internship program enhances the overall effectiveness of the internship initiative, aligning it closely with the specific needs and aspirations of participants, ultimately contributing to a more enriching and fruitful learning experience. Results indicated that Creative Industries graduates rated the usefulness of internships/practicums/placements as significantly lower than Business graduates (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021). Computer graphic design software facilitates an innovative teaching method that allows for unlimited trial and error, modifications, undos, and replications in makeup design, which transforms the conventional teaching of makeup design that has stagnated (Hsu et al., 2021).

The internship program at CLC in Depok City is optimized by meeting the criteria so that it has good output, which can be imitated / implemented in other CLC's. The internship program at CLC stands out as a model of optimization, meticulously designed to meet specific criteria that ensure not only its success but also generate commendable output. Compare to CLC in Sarawak Malaysia who operated by Indonesian, The constraints of the CLC in Sarawak include limited classrooms, low motivation of the students, and lack of teaching and learning equipment which affects the effectiveness of teaching and learning.(Wong et al., 2021) By adhering to rigorous standards, this program becomes a benchmark for excellence, serving as a valuable template that can be emulated and implemented in other CLCs. The optimization process involves a careful examination of the program's structure, content, and overall effectiveness in fostering a productive learning environment for interns. As a result, the initiative not only benefits the participants directly involved but also contributes to the broader enhancement of internship programs across various CLC branches, emphasizing a commitment to quality and consistent professional development.

With the internship, the availability of workers with graphic design competencies is increasing and this is an opportunity for CLC alumni to be accepted in the world of work. The implementation of the internship program has led to a notable increase in the pool of individuals equipped with graphic design competencies, presenting a valuable opportunity for CLC alumni to seamlessly integrate into the professional workforce. By providing interns with hands-on experience and practical skills, CLC has not only enhanced the employability of its alumni but has also strategically positioned them to meet the demands of the competitive job market. The exposure gained through the internship not only hones the technical abilities of CLC alumni but also instills a practical understanding of industry dynamics and expectations. Consequently, this surge in skilled graphic design professionals contributes to the broader workforce, establishing CLC as a key contributor to the supply of competent and industry-ready individuals in the field.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that participation in the internship program was associated with positive changes in learners' graphic design competence at the Community Learning Center. Improvement was observed across all assessed performance criteria, particularly in software selection, document management, design execution, use of software features, and the production of outputs suitable for screen or print. These findings suggest that internship-based learning can provide meaningful practical experience and support the development of workplace-oriented skills in nonformal education settings. The study also indicates that the use of SKKNI-based competency criteria offers a relevant framework for assessing learners' performance in relation to nationally recognized work standards. Although the findings should be interpreted cautiously due to the study's non-experimental descriptive design and limited sample size, they nevertheless highlight the potential of internship programs to strengthen the work-readiness function of Community Learning Centres. Future research is recommended to involve larger samples, more rigorous analytical procedures, and broader CLC contexts to further examine the contribution of internship-based learning to competency development in graphic design and other vocational fields.

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