

Character Building Evaluation Model of Dialogical Learning at Qaryah Thayibah Alternative School in Kalibening Salatiga Indonesia

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Abstract: Any learning model can only be regarded as effective or ineffective depending on the evaluation result. The problem is whether the method and procedure employed in the evaluation already measure the right points. There fore, many research and development are conducted to ensure the right points are measured. The result of this research is evaluation of the learning process concerning character building that include performance, project showcase and product assessment to evaluate aspects of religiosity, independence, honesty, respect, responsibility, discipline and cooperation at Qaryah Thayibah alternative school. Those values were assessed during events of project result display, comic work display, theater show, learning and discussion based on nature held at the school. The resulting recommendation is the need for an assessment form to ensure that educators are in line with the National Curriculum Standard in their work.

Key words: Learning, educators, curriculum, performance, cooperation

INTRODUCTION

Dialogical learning ensures equality of educators and learners in the learning process, the indication of which is lack of dominance from one party to the other but a process of mutual learning. This condition will facilitate critical minds that will not only accept but also question facts and even make changes. Hence, learning is not only confined to 'reading the text' but also 'considering the context' and 'understanding the world', as put forward by Freire (2001). Equal learning at Qaryah Thayibah alternative school is inspired by making use of nature, life and the surroundings as learning media. Qaryah Thayibah is an example of freedom and empowerment aimed at creating quality human resource with the solid foundation of science learned at school.

Preliminary research indicates that: Dialogical learning must be planned as not to be too rigid. The statutes should be in line with the national curriculum, without scarifying key competencies as the main targets. Planning is made with the presence of learners and educators custodians only serve as facilitators. Implementation of dialogical learning will instill values of religiosity, independence, honesty, respect, responsibility, discipline and cooperation via activities of project showcase and group discussion. Tolerance and social awareness will be taught by involving learners in social activities such as traditional commemorations regardless of social status or religious views. Achievements, hard work, creativity and independence of

learners will be acknowledged by facilitating them to write written works, document them and even publish them. Paket B program at Qaryah Thayibah is inspired by making use of nature, life and the surroundings as learning media. This school sets example for freedom and empowerment aimed at creating quality human resources that still adheres to the knowledge they learn at school. Paket B program at Qaryah Thayibah introduces its dialogical method in which dialogical dynamics between educators and learners are facilitated to enable them to deal with the real world. Hence, learners are expected to be knowledgeable, committed to cultural values and well-mannered in their everyday life. This serves the purpose of not only building knowledge but also character as outlined by the Indonesian Ministry of Education. The attitudes elaborated there include religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic, curios, nationalism and to have respect for friendship, achievement, peace, knowledge, the environment, social surroundings and responsibility.

Learning that is oriented toward how learners behave means that it is a process that is individual and that provide stimulus for a learner to change as a result of the information he/she acquires. Slavin (1986) states that learning is usually defined as a change in an individual caused by experience. This idea emphasized that learning is actually a change an individual undergoes as a result of his/her experience. Morgan as quoted by Toeti Soekamto defines changes as being relatively stagnant and is

results of practice or experience. Kimble Hergenbahn (1988), defines learning as relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of reinforced practice. Based on those ideas learning has facets of: change in an individual's attitude change that results from practice or experience and change as being relatively permanent over certain periods of time.

In order to figure out the outcome of a learning process, a systematic evaluation ensues. Evaluation of character building process integrates character into the curriculum. This is put forward by Berkowitz who said that integration of character into the curriculum is generally conducted in two ways; adding it into learning or providing a special session outside formal classes. One of these two options will be decided after consultations from both parties, i.e., learners and educators. Nonetheless, this content must be put into the plan, implemented in learning and measured at valuation. Concerning character learning, Wringe creates a criterion that results of character building is not when someone commits acts that are both socially and morally acceptable but when he/she does those based on moral conscience.

Hence, there needs to be a comprehensive concept that measures actions and their indicators based on the traditional values of the local community. Evaluation of learning outcome is basically a process to find out information concerning what learners have actually learned. It is about how educators know results of the learning process and how well have the learners understand what are taught or how competent they have now become. These indicators are designated in scores. Evaluation techniques to measure the progress of learners relate to the process and the result of learning. Some techniques commonly employed include performance, attitude, written, project, product, portfolio use and self-assessment evaluations. This research is focused on the factual techniques employed at Qaryah Thayibah alternative school.

This research is a research and development in nature. It is conducted in three stages; preliminary study, development and evaluation. The focus is character building evaluation model with sources of primary data that include the headmaster, educators and learners and sources of secondary data in the form of documents, modules and evaluation documents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Qaryah Thayibah does not apply rigid evaluation using the theory and or regulation from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The main goal is to attain regulation purposes by the government without being too

strict in its implementation. The indicators of this leniency are the method chosen and the points measured. Learners' characteristics are measured from project showcase, comic works, learning from the surroundings, art show, theater show, group discussion and the likes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the interviews and observations with both the management and educators concerning dialogical learning, the followings are found:

Evaluation using project showcase: Evaluation from project showcase is aimed at gathering information of learning results concerning characters of religiosity, creativity, independence, social awareness and self-confidence and also achievement by holding events and participating in traditional commemorations by showcasing the products students made. The following statement stresses this:

Should there be no exams. Evaluation is done by finishing the targets set and displaying the results at the project showcase

That statement indicates that daily evaluation as a formative assessment is not conducted by exams but via monthly project showcase. The score is based on the targets reached. The following statement stresses this further:

The project showcase is planned, outlined and carried out by the students themselves

Based on those statements, evaluation of independence, creativity and self-confidence is made via project assessment. The procedures are forming small work groups, assigning each group to make an organizational structure asking each group to make job description requiring every group to choose the topic or theme and assigning each group to make the report of the project showcased to be presented before the class. The project showcase allows learners to observe religiosity by having prayers before the show begins and when the show ends. The level achievements students manage during the showcase are assessed by the educators on the perceptual basis, instead of textual basis. Project showcase is conducted every month and the grand showcase is conducted every 6 months. There are two categories here; individual work and class/forum work. The showcase typically consists of the opening ceremony, dances and songs, presentations, religious chants performance and a final prayer together. In the

process of evaluation for honesty, learners are encouraged to put forward ideas on how to measure it themselves. Ideas from them include making a lost and found counter and also suggestions boxes. Some other ideas include being fair in everyday tests and/or semester exams. The nature of this is basically a dialog with educators. This is emphasized in the following statement by the management:

Actually, no boxes for suggestion or lost-and-found counter have been set up. But students always write an announcement on the board whenever they find lost items or want to put forward their ideas. And last semester's exam materials are always discussed together as additional learning materials

In order to instill responsibility and social awareness, certain study groups are formed and they are ready to go to the field. The objects are from the surrounding areas. An example includes a project to visit local rice fields to learn crop farming. This is wrapped in a statement by one of the students (Agung) as follows:

"Learning straight in the field with a farmer here, Now I know how wide his rice field is, how much water does he need for his field, how to plant crops and tender and harvest them. I concur that life for farmers here is hard. And it touched me as my parents are farmers themselves

This project helps learners to understand responsibility and care toward their surroundings by doing the followings as examples:

Keeping candy wrap in the pocket prior to throwing it in the bin, as not all places have dust bins. (This is categorized as a normal act). And picking up trash that is not his/her doing and putting them in the dust bin. (This is an extraordinary act)

Therefore, project showcase is one of the evaluation techniques to measure learners' competence in the category of religiosity, independence, creativity and even honesty. However, this method has its drawbacks including documentation instrument, indicator of success and competence attainment as well as the proper analytical procedure that have not adhered to the standard. Observation results also reveal that: first, there is no guidance available and the aspects to measure are not standardized yet. Hence, there is a need for valid and reliable instruments. Second, the rater is commonly only one person (the subject teacher). This is despite the many

components to be measured. Therefore, there is lack of comparative opinion for the proper decision to be made. Third, there is still the risk of subjectivity from the rater to give higher or lower score that he/she should.

Evaluation using comic work: Evaluation using comic work as a form of learning is oriented toward student on a weekly based. The aspects to reveal via comic work include; knowledge of plot which concerns with the story and attitude which relates with how to present a work of art. The following statement from an educator explains why comic is used as an instrument of evaluation:

Students tend to like reading more and be more creative, as they make their coming using the knowledge they gain from reading other comics

Therefore, it can be inferred that comic works are good sources to evaluate students' ability to read and improve their creativity.

Evaluation using learning from the surroundings: Evaluation on learning using the surroundings, as conducted by the educators is carried out at certain periods of time using an agreed theme based on the competence students should master within the first week which will then be explained further in the second week and that will be practiced in the third and fourth week within the school's locality. This is in line with the goal of the evaluation project which is to evaluate certain assignments designated for certain periods of time. These assignments include planning, data gathering, organizing, analyzing and data presenting. The traits evaluated using project assessment is democracy, tolerance, honesty and friendship. Character evaluation can be inferred from the choice of topic, the number and organization of each working group and data gathering and analyses. The character of social and environmental awareness is indicated with the activity of making the most of the fields in the surrounding area.

Evaluation using study and discussion groups: This type of evaluation is carried out on a weekly basis-on Mondays. It is called a ceremony and tawasi (to remind each other). During this ceremony, all problems encountered are discussed. Problems can be individual or from the class or forum. This occasion is also used to plan for next week's agenda. Meanwhile, tawasi is conducted on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at the praying room or the Resource Center, or any other available room. The theme for each meeting varies but

should relate to aspects of religiosity, honesty, tolerance, creativity, independence, democracy and environmental issues. This is stressed by an educator on one occasion:

This discussion revolves around issues of religiosity, why must people be honest, what is tolerance like and sometime presents things regarded as new or creative. The materials are decided by the students themselves. So they are independent. And the ensuing question and answer session enriches the materials presented. This leads to democratic exchange of ideas and argument

Evaluation using semester and national exams:

Evaluation using semester exam is significantly different from that of other schools as it relates to competencies in learning as represented with their ability to perform the above mentioned real activities. An educator stated:

There is no semester exam. What we have are monthly and biennial project showcase events. The report book is like the one used in normal learning process but the scores are determined by the learning citizen themselves

Monitoring is conducted by fellow students. Should targets are not met, problems are put forward and solutions are sought after together. Weekly project showcase encourages students to set and achieve their own weekly targets based on their typical skills and interests. There is no restriction as to what to make or what to learn. Based on those results, the hypothetically possible constructive approaches to carry out are as follow:

Performance evaluation: Theoretically, performance evaluation is aimed at measuring the competence of learners for certain assignments such as laboratory work, observing prayers, sports, role play, musical skills, singing, poetry and so on. Evaluation method should consider the followings: the steps learners have to take to indicate their competence, the number and accuracy of aspects to be judged, special abilities required to finish certain assignments, reasonable number of skills to be tested and the order of skills and/or abilities to be measured. Those considerations will help ensure a comprehensive description of learners' abilities. A check list of skills and a rating scale will help achieve this goal. A check list of skills helps educators to measure the competence of learners at different degrees and conditions as outlined in the learning objective. This check list (which consist of yes or no options), however, is very rigid, especially when it comes to judging characters. Hence, the use of rating scale will allow better range of scores for certain competencies. This is possible

as a continuum system enable the use of more than two values (yes or no, as found in the check list method). The evaluation scale may range from 1 = Incompetent, 2 = Competent enough, 3 = Competent and 4 = Very competent for instance.

Project evaluation: Project evaluation measures certain competencies to be measured in learning. These include learner level of understanding for certain fields and their ability to present relevant subjects with their fields. Some simple projects that illustrate this include; a research on water pollution in the local neighborhood, a project proposal for drama show themed nationalism and so forth. There are three aspects to consider in project evaluation: management skills; including the ability to choose a topic, find information and manage the time for data collection and report writing, relevance; including knowledge, understanding and skills in learning, originality; the project must be the original idea of the student(s) concerned without neglecting the contribution of the educators.

Product evaluation: Product evaluation relates to the process of making product and ensuring the quality of the product. The points to measure include the ability to make technological product and art works such as food, clothes, art works (sculpture, painting and drawing), items made of wood, ceramics, plastic and metal. Product development consists of three stages for assessment: preparation; including how learners plan, dig in and develop ideas and design products. Processing; including how learners select and use materials and tools and the techniques use appraisal; this is the stage where the products learners create are assessed. Product evaluation employs both holistic and analytical approaches. Holistic refers to the whole image a product creates (during appraisal) whereas analytical refers to certain aspects of the product (during development).

Portfolio evaluation: Portfolio evaluation is a continuous evaluation based on gathered information that shows the development of learners for certain periods of time. This information can be in the form of their masterpiece. It is basically an evaluation of individual learner's work in a subject for certain periods of time. The end product of a process is gathered and evaluated by the educator and the learner. Based on the resulting development information, the educator and the learner can cooperate to keep on improving. Then, in order to achieve the intended target, learning must also be designed based on the agreed portfolio to enable learners set their goals. This is in line with the statement by Clemmon that one of the ways to remind students of their goals is to write those goals on index cards or on the book and put them on the table so that students can always refer to them when they

are working on their portfolio. Therefore, learners must always be aware of their goals and learning focus. It can be inferred from those facts that portfolios enable students to know the progress of their learning through their works. These include writing, poetry, letter, composition and music.

Self-assessment: Self-assessment is an evaluation technique concerning the status, process and level of competence learners have. This method can be used to measure cognitive, affective and psychomotor competencies. A typical process may include learners assessing their mastery of skills and knowledge as the result of learning certain subjects. Their self-assessment is based on the provided guidance for certain subjects. Evaluation of affective competence, for example, includes learners being asked to write their opinion for certain objects. Evaluation of psychomotoric competence, on the other hand, includes learners being asked to assess their own abilities on some skills by referring to the provided criteria and references. The stages of this techniques are: determining the aspects of competence to be measured, determining the criteria to be used outlining the format of evaluation in the form of check list and/or rating scale asking learners to do self-assessment, reviewing samples of self-assessment at random to ensure learners provide accurate and objective evaluation and giving feedback to learners based on the result of self-assessment.

Written evaluation: Written evaluation in the form written test consists of some problems for learners to answer. There are two types of written test: multiple choice; for example yes or no, right or wrong, matching exercise and essay; for example short essay and structured and non-structured writing. The tests that provide right or wrong, short essay and matching exercise are of lower intelligence in nature. Multiple choices are also deemed weak as students do not come up with their own answers but limit themselves to the answers provided. This is made worse when they do not actually know the answer but only resort to guessing. Another drawback is lack of information that will in turn be used as feedback to diagnose problems in learning and modify the learning process. Essay writing, on the other hand, requires students to remember, understand and organize ideas they have learned. They also have to use their own words to come up with ideas, think logically and make conclusions. However this technique is deemed laden with drawbacks as the scope of materials asked is limited. Nonetheless, these can be improved by considering the proper materials, construction, language and principles of writing the problems. Based on the above mentioned facts, the evaluation techniques used by to reveal

students competence must be regulated and monitored by the management and educational agencies as to ensure their accountability. Gareis (2007) states that most educators conduct evaluation while neglecting accountability. Especially for evaluation that require learners to express their competence in practice. This further stresses the need for a thorough analysis prior to preparing evaluation guideline that will guarantee a comprehensive measure of attitude. This need is supported by the finding of Burden (2010) which concludes that most evaluations are not systematic and do not tend to lead to improvement. One of the principles of evaluation is to foster the balance between the goal of the school and the professional development of individual teachers.

CONCLUSION

A research on evaluation model carried out at Paket B Study Group at Qaryah Thayibah alternative school in assessing the characters of learners in terms of their religiosity, independence, honesty, respect, responsibility, discipline and cooperation in learning has been conducted. The assessment made use of project showcase, comic works and learning from the surroundings and art and drama shows. The assessment methods include performance evaluation, product evaluation, portfolio evaluation, self-assessment and written test. Based on the results, the followings are recommended: each process of learning evaluation must be accompanied with the best evaluation design by educators to ensure its accuracy; this evaluation design however must still adhere to the National Curriculum Standard so that graduates of Paket B program can compete with those joining normal public schools.

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