

STUDENT ACTIVE –LEARNING: A CURRICULUM INNOVATION IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: Innovation in education in Indonesia has been at a short span popular but decreased as other issues pursuing other policies dominantly present. The development of teaching models that do not match with the condition in the real implementation has made teachers confused. In addition, the curriculum contents and syllabuses that the teachers should based upon their teaching are other factors that innovation in education seem never consistently exist. This paper is a critical review on how innovation in education in Indonesia has been improperly developed.

Key-words: students active learning, innovation, curriculum

Indonesia as one of developing countries in the world is much concerned to improve the quality of education, as a consequence that education is as the proper effort to elevate the intellectual life of the nation in accordance with the Preamble of the 1945 constitution as the principle of nation. It is the responsibility of Indonesian Government and the entire nation to intellectualise every citizen. Article 31 stipulates that “(1) every citizen shall have the right to obtain an education, and (2) the government shall establish and conduct a national education system which shall be regulated by statute”.

There have been various frustrating ways done by the Indonesian government to embody the elevation of the intellectual life of the Indonesian nation. One of them is by doing innovation in education. CBSA or Student active-learning is one of educational innovation product aimed to increase the quality of teaching-learning process in the available schools from primary up to senior secondary school that will lead to achieving the highest quality of education.

This paper will discuss the implementation of student centred active-learning or learner centred Education in Indonesia that is started with the introduction. Then the definition of student active learning will be presented after. The next section is going to the literature review that is included such as a concept of student active learning, the role of teacher, the role of student, parent involvement, and resources. The last issue is describing the implementation of student active learning in Indonesia viewed from different aspects such as the experiment of student active learning or CBSA, the constraints of implementing CBSA program as the indication of a failure. It will focus on the irrelevant quality of teacher or school staff, student motivation, parent or society’s awareness, and the insignificant resources. This chapter will be ended with the signals refer to the successfulness of CBSA program.

ACTIVE LEARNING

Research and Training Centre of Ministry of Education and Culture Indonesia (1988) cited in Shaeffer (1990:67) defines that “active student learning (SPP-CBSA, in Indonesian) is the situation where teaching-learning activities in or out of class are carried out so that teachers as well as pupils work in active ways”. This can be seen more broadly as an approach of active teaching and learning. This approach intended to cope with the assumptions that teaching-learning process only focused on the situation where pupils can be taught longer “sit, listen, write, and memorize” (DDCH; duduk, dengar, catat, hafal in Indonesian). Sriyono (1993:9) states that CBSA is a teaching-learning process in which the learners are personally involved. Creativity, self-initiated and active interaction of the student are the major criteria of the CBSA.

There are various concepts of teaching-learning activities approach that have the same characteristics as student active learning such as student centred learning, learner managed learning, learner centred, interactive learning, student directed learning and participatory learning. These six methods of teaching-learning process are not completely synonymous, but all together focus on the student creativity, critical awareness, self-initiated and the way of how student can be more active personally involved in the process of formal schooling. Gamson and colleagues cited in Higgs (1993:122) believe that critical awareness will lead students’ empowerment. As Brandes and Ginnis’ (1986) point views:

“...so familiar to most teachers and learners, do not apply when the learner is personally involved. The rewards of working through a process together and finding new questions or answer on the other side are exciting in themselves. Intrinsic rewards are derived from the fun learning, of discovering, of challenging or questioning, of becoming competent in new areas and completing self-initiated tasks” (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986:13).

Similarly, according to Shaeffer (1990):

“The student-active learning (in the other word he called ‘student centred active learning) part of the innovation focused on several particular teaching and learning skills. These included understanding the objectives and purpose of learning; recognizing children as individuals, with particular interests, special abilities, and learning difficulties; using classroom organization and method most appropriate to the type of learning being undertaken; developing the ability to be critical and solve the problem; developing the classroom as a stimulating environment for learning; using the environment as a learning resource; and providing good feedback for better learning” (Shaeffer, 1990:68).

This approach will be created a learning atmosphere that is able to encourage student eagerness expressing their own voice based on their learning experiences through classroom activities such as debate, discussion, speech and simulation. Hopefully, no one of students will not be involved actively in this core activities. With the highest motivation of students supported by teacher’s highest dedication and creativity, the target of learning will be accomplished.

Hidayat (1996) states that it is a CBSA identified in which pupils are not empty vessel that has to be poured necessary or knowledgeable information. Conversely, Wilarjo (1999) suggested that they should be motivated to be more active, creative, initiative, critical thinking, inquiry, and discovery and able to solve the problem rather than receive information passively or being a very passive listener. Being more active can be applied in terms of discussion, solving problem, and debate. It is therefore really true what Dimmock (2000:138) argues that “students need the opportunity to develop their own thinking and to construct their own meaning; that is the essence of constructivism”.

Sembiring (1993:352) states that active learning in the concept of CBSA means student should be active thinking, eager to express their enquiries and discoveries, able to solve the problem, and responsible for their own behaviour, participation and learning. Sriyono (1992:8) also states that CBSA approach focus on the extent of student being active in the process of teaching-learning rather than material of learning. According to him that, as an alternative learning that is able to stimulate students' creativity, initiative and active participation is discussion, debate, and speech. To succeed these activities, teacher gives prepared student worksheet 3 to 7 days before the day of discussion or debate should be conducted. Hopefully, when it is time to have discussion or debate, the students will bear in mind what they should do in the classroom.

CBSA approach as a part of the 1984 Curriculum is one of learning methodology used to implement the national educational objectives stated in the law number 2/1983. In accordance with the information from some senior teachers like my head stated that since a few years ago the socialisation of CBSA introduced through the Lengthy Consultation of the Principal (MKS in Indonesian) and Teacher Activities Centre (PKG in Indonesian). It is regulated officially on the decree of Minister of Education and Research Development Centre (see the experiment of CBSA).

The Role of Teacher

Hayes (2000:21) states that “You probably entered the teaching profession because you wanted to work with children, influence their formative years and transmit your enthusiasm about a particular subject”. Thus being teacher should be aware of with whom they will work. In this case teacher, of course, should have very good dedication.

Teacher is a key actor in term of motivating, activating, controlling, and creating a conducive classroom situation to run the schooling. Hidayat (1996) said that the role of teacher in teaching-learning process where the student centred active learning approach applied is as a facilitator, motivator and mediator rather than instructor. So it is hoped pupils will enjoy the freedom of their critical thinking and be more personally motivated to involve actively in learning.

According to Brandes and Ginnis (1986):

“Indeed, the participative approach will require of the teacher some qualities and skills which perhaps may differ from those demanded by didactic methods. She must have a degree of sensitivity and perception in order to clarify and identify student needs. She will need to be capable of divergent thinking and considerable resourcefulness to find the materials requested by students, which cannot be

predicted in advance. Tact, skill, humour, and a willingness to take a risk, are needed to facilitate interpersonal communication in a participatory setting". (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986:15-16).

It seems that in this case the capacity of teacher is more complex rather than the traditional teaching approach. They should have the highest capability, awareness, and enthusiasm in organising the whole process of learning. As Pluckrose (2000: 41) has shown that "The teacher plays a central part in organising the learning process, for it is the teacher who decides how the curriculum is delivered, interprets the timetable and determines how the classrooms is arranged. It is the teacher who watches over and guides the 200 unpredictable human interactions which take place every hour in the typical classroom".

The Role of Student

Brandes and Ginnis (1986:12) articulates that "The ownership of learning is with the student. The teacher acts as a facilitator and a resource person. Students are responsible for choosing and planning the curriculum, or at least they participate in choosing. Learning is self-initiated, and often involves the processes of enquiry and discovery; the learner is also responsible for evaluating the results. A difficult concept to grasp, at first, is that each individual is 100% responsible for his own behaviour, participation and learning". It is all right to say that learner active participation is fundamental in student active learning approach. Graves (1993:2) also states that the students should be involved in deciding what to learn, how to learn, and how the learning will be assessed.

Furthermore, Michelle (2001) in her lecture 5 February 2001 explained that hopefully students should not be passive during a lesson. But they have to get actively involved in the learning process by initiating question on lesson topic and formulating concepts instead of just taking over concepts. It is very essential for the learners to ask questions to explain concepts and should try to comprehend what they are learning. Therefore, it is inevitable that mutual inquiry into matter is required to identify that learners listen to their classmates' questions, opinions and concerns in order to obtain excellent clarity and views on new content and ideas. Ginnis (1992:5) has already suggested that there should be a feeling of students becoming assertive and critical aware.

Parent Involvement

Hidayat (1996) suggested that the change of formal education system should be accompanied by the change of educational system in the family. It means that whatever the system of education at school is should be applied in the family as well. If the learners' parent tend to be more authoritarian or indoctrinative, learners will be more passive. In fact, children don't have opportunity to express their ideas. Consequently, these children are often reluctant or fearful to say something what they want to say. He believes that this culture or customs dominantly influences the way of they behave in the classroom.

Sriyono et al (1992:60) have shown that to succeed the implementation of CBSA program, the learners' parent should; be able to encourage their children to study hard at home; motivate their learner to reach good accomplishment or achievement; provide and meet

their children's learning need; control their schedule of learning. Furthermore, Dauber and Epstein (1993:53) state that 'parent involvement--or school and family connections--is a component of effective schools that deserves special consideration because it contributes to successful family environments and more successful students'. It is clear that parental involvement is fundamental aspect to accomplish not only student achievement but also school success. They also emphasise that 'children are more successful students at all grade levels if their parents participate at school and encourage education and learning at home, whatever the educational background or social class of their parents.

Resources

The educational quality can thus be interpreted as the capacity of the school as an educational institution to provide and utilize educational resources effectively so as to improve capacity. MOEC (1999) states that "educational resources mean educational components that can produce situations conducive to improve the teaching learning process, which in turn may improve student learning. The component are management input, educational process, the student and learning outcomes".

The management input consists of human resources (teacher and non-teaching staff), infrastructure and facilities, educational substances, time on task, educational techniques and methods. MOEC (1999) argues that these all components of management should be provided for the implementation of CBSA at schools that lead to succeeding an educational process of quality. The provision of these inputs are the indicators at the first degree, the following interpretations should be focused on the effective utilization of inputs in management as well as in the teaching learning process.

The educational process forms the core of the system as a number of resources are being efficiently utilized in the process. It includes school management and teaching process. MOEC (1999) also states that school management processes of quality are capable to utilize input to make qualitative teaching possible. On the other hand the quality of teaching processes directly managed by the teachers that enable students to learn as much as possible to achieve capacity which in turn cause high achievement.

CHALLENGES AND DRAWBACKS

Experiment of CBSA

Starting from the assumptions that the nature of teaching and the quality of education produced had changed very little in 1970s but it hadn't happened on the quantity of education that tended to show dramatic development. So Ministry of Education and Culture worked hard to solve the problem. Then it was active student learning or CBSA as the answer of improving the quality of education. Student active-learning or CBSA approach program was a new product of educational innovation in Indonesia. It was very important to do an experiment to know effectiveness of this product.

CBSA approach has been exercised based on the collaborative decrees between the Research Development Centre in Education and Culture No. 1897/G.3/1/1980 and Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education No. 087/C/Kep/1980 on May 31st, 1980.

Wahyono (1998) states that it therefore was experimented in some schools in Cianjur the district of West Java in 1979. This area is close to Jakarta and the Institute of Teacher Training Bandung, which was expected to play a major role in its development. Economically, Cianjur was a whelthier district than average regions in Indonesia. There was implication that the experiment was fully successful. Shaeffer (1990:71) has shown that “the general implementation strategy for the project was quite clear. It was meant to grow slowly, from the bottom up – from one area to another, and from a survey of actual practice to amore general model, then to replication in selected other districts, then to systematic evaluation after five years, and finally to a national plan”.

After looking at such implication, Balitbang as the institution of national curriculum innovation is very responsible for the further development and realization of CBSA program. It is inevitable that willingness to disseminate the new innovation to the entire of Indonesia, as national educational program, was one of good response from expertise and politician at that time. Thereby, according to Shaeffer (1990:71), with any considerations for about 60 schools come from three sub-districts of Cianjur as core schools and others that were identified ‘satellite’ schools and Balitbang staff took apart in series training activities in London funded by ODA fund. Then the further training action was conducted in Indonesia. It was just for education officers, headmasters, and teachers.

Shaeffer (1990:71) clearly describes that “The Curriculum Development Centre at Research Development Centre (Balitbang) formed a project team whose purpose was to guide the project of CBSA, train the critical actors, and develop manuals and guides for teachers and headmasters. The local Institute of Teacher Training and Education and Senior Teacher Training School intended to provide expertise in primary education methods and training for project staff; the local provincial education office provided funds; the Ministry of Education staff at the district and sub-district level built working groups to help establish and monitor the various project activities, especially the Teacher Centres and the clusters.

The Quality of Teacher or School Teaching Staff

Teachers play major role to succeed the innovation of CBSA in Indonesia. Unfortunately, in a fact there have been indications that the first is some teachers do not have good experience (e.g. teacher training for the project of CBSA) and are reluctant to comprehend to the real concept of CBSA program. Hayes (2000:22) has shown that “inexperienced teachers often overact to occurrences that their more experienced colleagues take in their stride”. Consequently, as Riberu (1996) said that most of teachers carry out CBSA traditionally in which student tend to write the whole taught material rather than discussing them in the process of teaching learning. The reason is that they do not fully understand and internalize the real concept of CBSA. Then, there is perception among these teachers that the most important thing for the teachers are to practice the CBSA program as compulsory in order to satisfy the head masters or other superordinates rather than mastering CBSA as the affective method to accomplish student achievement.

As Samiawan (1984) in Shaeffer (1990:70) described that “..., this characteristics of the CBSA made it quite a radical innovation -- not in its pedagogy, which was based on the traditional concepts of good teaching, but rather than in its ‘sociology’ wherein the relations

among actors and between levels of the system were to be quite radically changed. No longer were teacher to act 'asal bapak senang' (so that "father" is happy); rather, individuals at quite different levels of the system were to act based upon a more objective paradigm which encouraged frankness and clarity in relationships".

It can be seen, for instance, from my own experience in my school in which some teachers pretended to teach students based on the label of CBSA approach when the headmaster supervised their classes. Hopefully, the head master felt very happy and satisfied. Then of course he/she would praise them in the teacher meeting. But beyond of this satisfaction, these teachers did not practice the real CBSA, because they just asked one of students to be facilitator or mediator. While the teacher often stayed in the teacher room to do another personal activities like smoking, chatting or gossiping with those who hadn't class. The main purpose of my colleagues doing so is to satisfy the boss and got rewards from the head.

The second indication is some teachers are not qualified enough. It makes them difficult to manage and control the class. According to Shaeffer (1990):

"Many teachers, unable to function in a setting which called up on them to use their supposedly pent-up creativity to design appropriate and then choose among these the ones needed for particular occasion, became fixated with one or another recommended methods, especially group work and worksheets". (Shaeffer, 1990: 73)

It seems that there is not self-initiative for those teachers to be able to activate students in teaching learning process. It is dominantly influenced by the extent or quality of teacher. MOEC (1999) has shown that it is still large problem to produce teachers with adequate qualifications to teach at the primary and secondary level. So the quality of teacher in Indonesia believed to become a major problem.

It is true what MOEC said that the quality of teacher is very low. The most important thing for the government is to meet the quantity of teachers without regarding the quality. As Heidar spoke to Kompas (1997) states that based on the result of his research for his Doctor degree, most of student graduated from the university in Indonesia are not professional enough in doing work. It is a failure of university as an institution that is not able to create professional teacher. Many factors influenced this condition. Davies (1995:2) argues that "Competitive studying has created what has been termed 'the diploma disease' (Dore, 1976), where the prime concern is for certificates and paper results, not fro productivity in work or the ability to share learning with others".

Each district in Indonesia has different system and strategy in recruiting new teachers to meet their need. It directly will influence the recruitment of new teacher. In my school, for example, at least 40% of 21 teachers are graduated from short-term teacher training course that is equal to Diploma 1. Disappointingly, my head teacher is included in this level of education.

Suprihadi (1999) has shown that there are still some schools in sub-districts which is close to Indonesian capital do not have enough qualified teachers. In Bekasi, for instance, a state primary school has a teacher only. The daily profession of that teacher is a gardener of that school. Unfortunately, this teacher, who is graduated from elementary school, should be

responsible to teach six classes all together.

Logically, it is my belief that educational background of teachers will effect the extent of their poor dedication or intention and capabilities as well. Perhaps it will be more clear if I take another example from my own experience at my school that is there are three teachers graduated from the university, but in fact these teacher can't teach at all. Their daily responsibility is as supply teachers. It might be able to be identified that it is very serious problem to succeed the CBSA.

Student Motivation

Ratmana (1996) states that most of the failure of CBSA program is caused by the lower extent of student intelligence. She believes that there is correlation between student brightness and student motivation. Students will be more active and creative if they are more intelligent. Those who are more brilliant have higher motivation in learning. Therefore, it needs active participation of teacher and parent as well in order to stimulate unmotivated student. As it is suggested by Hayes (2000:31) that students should get schools', in this case teacher, collaborative endeavour of extrinsic form of motivation. In my school, for example, every teacher should work hard to motivate and encourage students' interest in learning. Particularly, to eliminate a belief among them that education can't give them much money. They are sure that they should spend much money for education. So they underestimate about education by arguing that education is not important for their life.

From the above real history can be concluded that it is very hard to say all students have optimal motivation in learning, particularly for those who live in the rural areas. To rescue this situation needs very serious collaboration between school and parent.

Parents or Society's Awareness

Mostly, the extent of parents' educational awareness is by their education or knowledge and life conditions. Those who achieve good education and are in good life condition will have better contribution on the development of education. Nixon et all (1996) clearly argues:

“The condition associated with disadvantaged contexts-low standards of living, lack of control over one's own working life, job insecurity and unemployment, and the increased risk of ill health-have a severe impact on learning. The accumulation of these conditions overtime can mean that parents lack of the knowledge and resources to access the education system and the confidence to make demands on it.” (Nixon, 1996:111)

It is actually true what Nixon et all said above, because this situation is also still happening in Indonesia. I can take my village as an example that 80 % of 4500 residents do not finish the primary education. It is absolutely difficult to say that they contribute ambitions to develop education in that village. As result, It gives impact on their children's educational sense. Minister of Education of Indonesia, Muhaimin spoke to Kompas (2 March 2001) states that how parents can contribute to development of education if they never go to school to take

their children's school report card. They don't care to what their children achieved at school.

Most parents are not concerned to the children improvement. For instance, in my hometown the learner's parent never come to school. Eventhough they received invitation for parent-teacher meeting. Basically this meeting was very important for their children achievement. But it is very common not attending school meeting. The other disappointingly phenomenon is some students didn't go to school because their parent did not permit them to go. They should help their parent to go to traditional market located in village. Furthermore based on the research done by Suara Pembaruan Indonesia in 1999 has shown that it is big problem for the poor parent to meet the practical instrument needed by their children in the schools where CBSA program is applied in the teaching-learning process. While there is assumption among parents that, the CBSA approach spends much money to provide learning material and instruments in its implementation in the teaching-learning process.

The Insignificant Resources

There are various resources related to the process of learning. But in this chapter will focus on the financial resources, infrastructure, facilities and visual aids.

Shaeffer (1990:1) says that "changing an education system is complicated by it close links to the economic system (i.e., education as an apportioner of future economic opportunities) and to social and political system (as the inculcator of particular values, beliefs and ideologies)". It is, of course, Indonesia as a developing country will depend on the social, political and economic situation so much to succeed overall educational program change.

The financial resources are the major problem in disseminating the CBSA program. As Shaeffer (1990:71) stated that "Unlike the glory years of the Professional Support System (PPSP in Indonesian) and PAMONG, the CBSA-SPP has always suffered from a lack of resources. This was partly by design, based on a desire to work within likely financial constraints at the time of further dissemination. Thus, few new investments were anticipated even from the beginning".

The financial resources always reflect to the availability of infrastructure (e.g. building), facilities (e.g. electricity, library) and visual aids. For example, most schools in rural area around where I live in do not have comfortable facilities such as library and electricity. It is also very difficult to use visual aids. The most disappointingly is that they do not provide enough number of textbooks or handbook as the main need of learning. Soedijarto et al (1980:70) states that "One of the major shortages suffered in nearly all schools throughout the 1960s had been that of text books and supplementary learning materials". Actually what had happened in 1960s has been existing until now, particularly some remote areas.

Signals to successfulness of CBSA

Shaeffer (1990) describes:

"CBSA, on the other hand, has gone very quickly into the real world of Indonesian schools. It has moved more rapidly into more schools in the original site, some with relatively little supervision or evaluation, and eventually into provinces and

school districts. It is, therefore, very quickly learned what problems the innovation would face in the larger population of Indonesian schools.” (Shaeffer, 1990:90)

It shows that since the process of experimental CBSA, it spread out rapidly over some schools around the schools where the experiment had been done. Most favourite schools in Indonesia whether it is state or private schools apply CBSA approach as a mode or trend.

According to Wilarjo (1999) there is a new trend of education in Indonesia in which most schools tends to run teaching learning activities by using CBSA approach. He believes that if the school carry out the CBSA approach properly the highest achievement will be in hand. The 1994 curriculum proposes CBSA approach as a method that lead to the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching learning process.

CONCLUSION

It needs government’s concern to increase the improvement of teacher quality by handling as often as possible teacher training dealing with the concept of CBSA offered by ministry of education. Hopefully, these teachers will know and implement the CBSA properly. It is also important for the government to train the overall teachers particularly those who teach in the rural areas about CBSA. This refers to the law no. 2/1992 that almost all teachers have the same opportunity to improve their knowledge by commencing the higher education.

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