

Life Skills Education Program: Is it Beneficial for the Society?

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Abstract

The life skills education program was created to answer the poverty and unemployment problems faced by those without access to formal education. The research is aimed at evaluating the implementation effectiveness of the life skills education program at the Course and Training Institutions. This research uses the qualitative approach with the evaluative method. The evaluation model used is a model developed by Stufflebeam, namely CIPP model (context, input, process, product) but this article only focuses on the product evaluation. The results of this study indicate that the result of the program did not run as expected as the program participants absorbed by formal employment only numbers 18% while the others were only working as part times employment. The result also recommend that the program developer needs a very careful judgement when choosing the Course and Training Institutions executing the program. The research at the product stage showed that most of the program alumni don't enter to formal sector. The novelty and contribution of this research is the creation of an evaluation model using the AIR method (Achievements, Issues and Recommendations) which will facilitate further researchers and related parties in utilizing the results of this study.

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INTRODUCTION

Good education, formal, informal and non-formal are basically education that prioritizes the noble values of the goals of education itself, namely producing people who are skilled and have good character in creating a prosperous and prosperous nation (Biesta, 2015; Shofwan et al., 2019; Tudor, 2013). Each education unit has different roles with the same end goal (Rönnlund et al., 2019).

The fact is that not all people are able to access all levels of formal education (Peters, 2017). Most people may be able to access formal education up to the highest level of education but some may only be able to access formal education up to primary and secondary education levels (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019). Education for all or globally termed Education For All (EFA) is the right of every citizen to obtain education. (Guo, 2014; Heryahya et al., 2020; Mulyadi et al., 2019; Sommers, 2014).

Education for all or globally termed Education For All (EFA) is the right of every citizen to obtain education. Benavot (2016) stated that, "underline the fact that inadequate attention to education of good quality and a failure to reach the marginalized have contributed to a learning crisis that needs urgent attention (Benavot, 2016). While Celestine Mayombe (2017) stated that, "EFA's third goals lays a ground for providing skills training to all youth and adults in order to integrate into labor markets.

Non-formal education has a very important role in education for marginalized people such as adults who discontinue schooling. The purpose of Non-Formal Education (NFE) is to provide alternative learning opportunities for those who don't have access to formal schooling or need specific life skills and knowledge to overcome different obstacles.

Non-formal learning is usually carefully adjusted to the needs and interests of the participants and structured personal fostering practices, social and professional development of people, on a voluntary basis. It is highly relevant, particularly when it comes to the needs of disadvantaged groups because it more often takes into account specific categories of persons, focuses on clearly defined purposes, and it is flexible in organizations and methods (Intarat & Chanchalor, 2017).

Whereas, according to Sufyan (2019) non-formal education is every educational activity that is organized, systematic, and carried out outside the formal system framework to provide certain types of learning for certain subgroups in

the population, either adults or children.

Non-formal education takes many forms: part-time 'second-chance education' for those who are unable to take advantage of regular classes; youth clubs with substantial educational objectives; adult and continuing education; community education; personal development programs such as cultural, linguistic, fitness and sports programmes; and professional and vocational programs for the unemployed and the upgrading of work (Latchem, 2018).

Kemendikbud (2003) mandated Non-formal education in law No 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, in Article 26, which specifically highlights non-formal education as part of the national education system. One of the non-formal education is life skills education program focused on trying to facilitate lower class people unable to access formal education which correlate with poverty and unemployment (Jaliwala, 2017; Sudiapermana & Muslikhah, 2020). As the latest data Central Bureau of Statistics (2016) that unemployment rate stand on 5,50% in 2017, 5,33 in 2017, 5,13 in 2018 and 5,01 in 2019 respectively while the number of people living in poverty stands at 27,76 millions in 2016, 26,58 millions in 2017, 25,67 millions in 2018 and 25,14 millions in 2019 respectively (Biro Pusat Statistik, 2017). On the basis of the above data, the government is trying to solve and find a solution through the creation of life skills educational programs. The programs aim to strengthen the poor and unskilled society in order to be able to enter formal employment (Dirjen PAUDNI Kemendikbud, 2018).

The Life Skills Education Program is an education and training service program geared to the development of job skills provided to students in such a way that they have competence in certain areas of competence that are suitable for job opportunities. Life Skills Education graduates may work in companies, manufacturing, service industries, home industries or other industries.

The government believes that if the program succeeds, unemployment and poverty could be significantly reduced. Of course, it helps to solve all the problems faced by any government. This research is to find the effectiveness of life skills education program in eradicating dan reducing the poverty and unemployment in Indonesia

METHODS

This research used evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam (2012) namely CIPP (Context, Input, Process and Product). The research is

only focused on the product evaluation, the latest stage of CIPP model. It was represented in three sub-foci, namely (1) Evaluation Results of Institutional Assessment, (2) Competency Testing by Competency Certification Institution (CCI) and (3) Placement of Program Participants in business or employment.

The evaluation model is part of the qualitative research model in which data were obtained through interviews, documents and observations. The most important thing in qualitative research is the identification of data sources that can help to solve the problems studied.

The identification of the data sources of the interviewees in this qualitative research was carried out on an objective basis. The purpose is to select informants with certain considerations and objectives. Certain considerations made by the researcher were intended to identify and select informants who are considered to have the most knowledge of the program or problems studied.

Data were taken from the course and training institution in East Jakarta responsible for conducting the training of life skills education program, program participants, course and training institution managers and competency certification institution.



Figure 1. Research Data Sources

Data were collected from January 2018 – December 2018, involving 11 courses and training institutions in East Jakarta, officials from the Course and Training Development Directorate, the certification body for related skills, program participants and industries. It took about a year to complete the data, as the researchers had to visit the research objects and adjust the time available to them.

Data were collected through documents, interviews, and observations. After the data were collected, they were analyzed, coded and conclu-

ded. (Matthew, et al., 2014).

Research began by drawing up headings for observation and interviews. The interview process was carried out at the agreed locations, but it was mostly carried out where the participants resided. It took about 6 months for observation and interview data to be collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, in the sub-focus evaluation of learning outcomes, it shows that the Institute's evaluation process is capable of delivering maximum results that can be seen from a graduation rate of 100 per cent. It means that the process of life skills education program on the non formal institution perspectives is run very well.

The result shows that the practical process authorized by the Course and Training Institutions has worked well and has confirmed the responsibility of the institutions.

The result of the 100 per cent level of success is two perspectives, one of which means that the process and the competence match each other so that the participants can acquire the skills and competencies they need. While the second requires a more collaborative assessment of how the evaluation model of the program was developed.

The program shall be developed and evaluated on an ongoing basis. A comprehensive evaluation and evaluation of the programs will result in improved outputs and outcomes. It will finally develop the quality of graduates and provide a high level of bargaining position within industries.

The result of an institution's review or self-assessment as the main basis for an institution to have a thorough knowledge of the process that it has set up. It is also part of the internal quality assurance process. The result would then be compared with the external assessment carried out by the competent certification agency and the industry.

The same findings have also been proven for the Competency Certification Institute's test of the competency exam. The cumulative results of the competency test obtained by the members of the program showed very positive results with a graduation rate of 100 per cent. This can be understood because the learning process and the teaching material follow the competency standards set by the relevant Institute for Certification of Competencies.

The above result had a significant correlation with the internal institution's self-assessment. If the result of the internal assessment carried

out by the institutions is significant and the same, it means that the program process could be well established. In fact, the certification body as an external assessment model is set up to measure the outputs of the programs for certain skills. Since the certification body is mostly professional and expert in the field they assess, the result could represent the competence of the program participants. If the certification body says "yes" that you are competent, it means that the entire program process has been carried out responsibly and correctly.

Slightly different results are in placement in the Business and Industrial World, where the majority of institutions are unable to place program participants in the business and industrial world. A small number of institutions (18%) were able to place their graduates in the business and the industrial world and they are only placed in non-formal employment not in line with the initial objective of targeting the absorption of participants/ graduates in formal employment. From a total of 250 participants in the program, the data reveals that only 18 per cent of graduates of the program can be distributed to the business world and industry even though they only work in non-formal industry. Whereas the remaining 82 per cent of graduates of the program do not work in permanent jobs. Most of them work only part time, and or work on a free call-based basis.

The program participants can get additional income but when we return to the program's initial premise, the product aspect is the key emphasis that requires enhancement. It means that the absorption on the industry is the most important measurement. The result of the three components did not show a linear result in which the self-assessment carried out by the institutions and the external assessment carried out by the competent certification body showed the competence of the programmes, while the competence gained by the participants after the program did not guarantee them the possibility of entering formal employment.

Assessment of product components or outcomes is a very critical evaluation because if the product can be as expected, a system can be said to be efficient or not. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), products are goods or services that are manufactured and added in the production process to their value and become the final outcome of the production process. If the life skills education program is considered a production process, all the preparations from the context, input, process and product stages are a series of production activities producing qualified

graduates.

Graduates are therefore the outcome of the teaching and learning output cycle carried out by the Institute of Courses and Training and assisted by the training and course creation policies provided by the Directorate of Training and Course Development. Another thing is that most people in the program don't work on traditional job paths. For some countries that implement the same educational model, the same thing which is the aim of changing behavior is also not achieved (UNICEF, 2002).

While Savickienei (2011) and Singh (2016) state that student learning achievement assessment has a significant impact on student learning; reveals important aspects of the curriculum; valid evaluation is one of the factors that encourages successful learning; results indicate better and worse student achievements; strengthens self-confidence and weakens self-confidence for others.

Gardner and Brooks (2018) also states that evaluation is the procedure by which observed differences in predictive performance are formally evaluated in order to draw inferences from the results of an experiment. The measurement of the program shall be based on "1) developing a reasonable level of agreement among key stakeholders on missions, outcomes-oriented goals, and strategies (resources and processes) to be used to achieve goals; 2) measuring performance on a regular basis; 3) using performance information if efforts to improve program effectiveness and strengthen accountability to key stakeholders and the public." (Wholey, et al., 2010).

Good education programs are those focusing on "a basis of an employer-driven, demand-driven model. Assessment and student enrollment adjustment are implemented based on industry demands (Hu & Bowman, 2016).



Figure 2. The three functions of education and the three domains of educational purpose (Bi-esta, 2015).

What knowledge it is and how it can be acquired, or what it means to exist as a human being. Although we can make a distinction between the three domains of purpose, they can not really be separated. Even if we're 'just' trying to give our students some knowledge, we're also affecting them as individuals - to have knowledge will, after all, potentially empower them and, in doing so, we're also representing particular traditions, for example by communicating that this particular knowledge is more useful or valuable or true than other knowledge (Biesta, 2015).

Educational outputs and outcomes now become the most important parts of the educational institution no matter informal institutions such as course and training institution. So that Bureaucratic representation research suggests that these trends are relevant to school decision-making and student outcomes, providing an empirical basis for normative work in support of recruitment of a more diverse educator's workforce. (Grissom et al., 2015). In general this work skills education program is very good in answering the need for special skills for those who can not access formal education but not specifically employing employer and demand driven models (Cinque, 2016; Hu & Bowman, 2016) which can be seen from the low level of absorption in the industry.

Life skills education programs aimed at creating students who are qualified and ready to work in the manufacturing environment need to be comprehensive from the outset how to accomplish these goals by planning all the requisite tools. The initial process in the form of an MOU must be checked from the outset so that the placement of graduates in the world of work and industry can be predicted from the outset and the reduction of poverty and unemployment rates can be measured quantitatively and the results of this program can be felt directly by the community in the form of definite income.

Overall, this research shows that, from the component of the results, this program still has weaknesses in the process of placing program participants/alumni in the business and industrial world, while the program will see its level of success in this component.

CONCLUSION

The absorption of program participants in the Business and Industrial World is one of the most crucial in the life skills education programme. This is also a part which will need to be given very intensive attention. But judging from the graduation of program participants and their

ability to work independently and be able to generate income even if not regularly, this program is still very feasible to continue even though some skills should be transferred to an enterprise program with the ultimate goal of having the skills to be used for entrepreneurship. Some of the skills in these skills are far better suited to be the program than life skills education programs. The program, as it was planned, is actually an answer for those without access to formal schooling and employment but in the implementation the program needs a lot of improvement especially those for the placement of the program participants in the formal employment so that the target of reducing the poverty and unemployment can be easily measured. There is no doubt that this program is still needed especially for those living in poverty because they are not in a position to enter formal education. Some measurements need to be improved, of course. The quality of the teaching and learning process will also be developed and improved as the quality of the graduates develops. Last but not least, the program should also adopt new technology in response to the current state of play. Technology can also be an opportunity for the program to spread to more people across the country. At the end, every disadvantaged people from around Indonesia can easily access the program from their homes, as technology makes the program close to them.

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