

Conference Paper

Theme-based Lesson Plan for the Volunteers of After-school Program in Rumah Belajar Kagem, Jogjakarta

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Abstract

Learning may come in many different ways. In Indonesia, learning activities can be carried out in formal, informal, and also non-formal institutions. As mentioned in Section 5, verse 26, item 2 of UU SISDIKNAS (the National Education Law), non-formal education is functioned to improve students' potential with the emphasis on knowledge and functional skills' mastery added with attitude enhancement and professional entity. In this case, the aforementioned characteristic is reflected in the after-school program in Rumah Belajar KAGEM. KAGEM is a non-profit institution established in 2012 to help children in Ngaglik, Sleman to have after-school activities. One distinctive characteristic offered by KAGEM is free-of-charge classes taught by volunteers. KAGEM's volunteers are mostly university students and work for free in this institution. The volunteers are working on various topics that enables them to interactively disseminate ideas with the children. Nevertheless, most of them find it challenging to make proper lesson plan that is based on daily basis events. Thematic activities are brought up to put learning in real setting. To respond the issue, the researchers conducted a training for the volunteers of KAGEM that incorporates day-to-day issues to the after-school program. Under the university's community service program, the researchers conducted observations and followed by training on making theme-based lesson plan which aimed to meet the needs of this institution. From the result of reflection given after the training, KAGEM's volunteers find the training helpful and insightful, since there is limited chance offered to them for upgrading their teaching skills. They also feel more motivated and challenged to work on the volunteering duty and ready to dig out new approaches that suit the learners in *Rumah Belajar* KAGEM.

Keywords: Lesson plan, after-school program, training

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1. Introduction

Learning may come in many different ways. In Indonesia, learning activities can be carried out in formal, informal, and also non-formal institutions. Sulfasyah and Arifin (2016: 1-2) state that learning is started from informal education. Informal education is an education given in the person's family and considered as the basis for all types of education. It is then continued with formal education which is basically school-based learning. Here, an individual continuously study from primary to higher education. Meanwhile, non-formal education aims to be an enrichment to the formal education that an individual has. It is delivered independently and suits a particular need. As mentioned in Section 5, verse 26, item 2 of UU SISDIKNAS (the National Education Law), non-formal education is functioned to improve students' potential with the emphasis on knowledge and functional skills' mastery added with attitude enhancement and professional entity. It may seem that government is the caretaker of all the three types of education. However, here is where college or university can take part and contribute in disseminating knowledge to broader audiences.

College life, for its students, offers variety of chances to get involved in social activities, in or out of campus. These social activities enable them to explore their interests in particular fields. One of them is in education. There is a special education program called *AyoMengajar!* in Islamic University of Indonesia. This program adapts a well-known volunteering program, *Indonesia Mengajar* which invites students from various department to teach children (aged 7 - 12) with a curriculum that focuses on Islamic teachings. Another volunteering program that focuses on education is *Bimbingan Belajar* program in Rumah Belajar KAGEM Jogjakarta. Different from *AyoMengajar!*, *Bimbingan Belajar* program is not a campus-based initiative; it is an organization-based program. Rumah Belajar KAGEM Jogjakarta is a non-profit institution established in 2012 to help children in Sardonoharjo, Ngaglik, Sleman to have after-school activities. One distinctive characteristic offered by KAGEM is free-of-charge classes taught by volunteers. This program is conducted after the school hours and carried out by KAGEM's volunteers who are mostly students and work for free in this institution.

In the case of Rumah Belajar KAGEM Jogjakarta, the volunteers are working on various topics that enables them to interactively disseminate ideas with the children. Nevertheless, they rarely plan the materials they are going to deliver. Most of them find it challenging to make a proper lesson plan that is based on daily basis events. Thematic activities are brought up to put learning in real setting. To respond the issue,

the researchers conducted a training for the volunteers of KAGEM that incorporates day-to-day issues to the after-school program. Under the university's community service program, the researchers conducted observations and followed by training on making theme-based lesson plan which aimed to meet the needs of this institution.

2. Literature Review

As the volunteer we also find the difficulty of the loyalty to keep them stay on the volunteering program because there is no payment to them for their contribution. In addition to all these, unresolved conflict and poor performance will also scare off the most capable, healthy leaders. They'll just step back or go elsewhere. Other than that the most problem thing that we found on KAGEM is, the volunteer isn't understood about what material that they want to teach to the kids. So, the solution is giving them training about how to plan the materials to teach with coherent steps to be applied to the kids.

In some societies, volunteering is the heart of community-building. Volunteering promotes trust and reciprocity. Wu (2011: 3) points out that in the last decades, government has recognized the critical contribution that volunteering makes to build a strong and cohesive society. It has promoted volunteering as the essential act of citizenship, a means for combating social exclusion, and an important contributor to the delivery of high quality public services. Additionally, strong management is the core element in creating and supporting an effective volunteer structure, both for the organization and the volunteer. There needs to be a clear line of communication established and documented to ensure that the volunteer has a direct line of contact with the organization and with a designated post or person within the organization.

Next, theme-based learning gives students an opportunity to see the process of learning that is applicable to real life. The Ministry of Education and Culture formulated the 2013 Curriculum using theme-based approach as its baseline. It is expected that theme-based approach is able to provide holistic approach to a meaningful learning. Dermody (2004, in Sesorina, 2014: 2) asserts that the success of theme-based learning is chiefly based on the teacher's knowledge and competencies. Thus, classroom learning needs to be designed to meet this success. One of the keys is having an appropriate lesson plan. Generally, there is no standard format of a lesson plan; however, common content of a lesson plan includes goals, objectives, activities, media, and assessments. These common format that is adapted in this study. This study focuses on an after-school program for the students in the neighbourhood of Rumah Belajar KAGEM who find

the program very helpful, especially those who have working parents. These parents sometimes cannot accompany them in doing their school work.

Rumah Belajar Kreatif Kaki Gunung Merapi (KAGEM) Jogjakarta is a non-profit organization that focuses on various activities, such as, social, education, and economic empowerment. This organization was established to promote knowledge sharing and charity giving. KAGEM was established in 19 October 2011 and formally released in 22 January 2012. It is located in Dayakan, Sardonoarjo, Ngaglik, Sleman. For the past six years, KAGEM's program that receives positive response from the surrounding society is *Bimbingan Belajar*. This program aims to teach primary school subjects for children in the age of 7-12 and held after school hours. *Bimbingan Belajar* is free-of-charge program that is fully organized and handled by Punggawa (KAGEM's volunteers).

Throughout the years, problems faced by *Bimbingan Belajar* program and some other KAGEM's programs are availability and commitment of volunteers. Similar problems also occur in other non-profit organization, as shown in the study by Intan and Sitio (2016) about "Volunteers' Motivation on Educational CSO among Marginalized and Street Children." This study points out on the role of volunteers in civil society organization (CSO) namely *Yayasan Sahabat Anak* (YSA) and *Terminal Hujan* (TH) that dedicated their educational service for marginalized and street children in Jakarta and Bogor. The organizations are supported by numerous volunteers; however, YSA and TH still find difficulties in both recruiting and maintaining volunteers in their organizations. Renklou and Rosen (2013, in Intan and Sitio, 2016: 78) assert that social organization should have strategy in maintaining volunteers, especially in the way the organization understands the aspects that motivate its volunteers.

The results of the study indicate that volunteers stay in the volunteering activity for the reasons, like, shared values with the institutions and possible future career enhancement. To maintain the retention of volunteers, CSO can held training for volunteers or big events involving its volunteers. Therefore, the researchers believe that one solution to maintain volunteers' availability and consistency is by giving a training that helps the volunteers themselves improving their capacities. Thus, other college students who have interests in joining voluntary activities will not lose their enthusiasms.

3. Methodology

This study employed qualitative approach to collect and to analyse the data. Qualitative approach is seen suitable in this study, since the study meets some characteristics of

qualitative inquiry that Creswell (2009: 175) mentions, such as, collecting the data in natural setting, gathering the data through documents, and participants' behaviour and response, relying on multiple data resources, and interpreting the participants' meanings upon certain problem or issue. Additionally, this study was conducted as the researchers' obligation to conduct community service program. The service program aims to offer solution to problems faced by partners distributed around the campus. Rumah Belajar KAGEM is located approximately 6.2 km from the main campus of Islamic University of Yogyakarta. The researchers divided the programs into two steps, observation and reflection. In the first part, the researchers conducted an observation to the volunteers of Rumah Belajar KAGEM using Google Forms, filled out by seven volunteers. After getting feedback from the volunteers, the researchers conducted a training on making theme-based lesson plan for *Bimbingan Belajar* classes in KAGEM. At the end of the training, the researchers distributed reflection sheet to see whether or not the training had met the volunteers' expectations and suggestions for further improvement. There are six volunteers joined the training. The observation form and reflection sheet are sorted and categorized to map the volunteers' response. Finally, the results are presented in the subsequent section.

4. Findings

After examining the observation form, the researchers find some insightful findings, as followed. Respondents are mostly enjoyed the *Bimbingan Belajar* program, since they think that the program is useful for both the teachers (volunteers) and the students. They also mention that the program helps the students to understand materials in school in fun ways. Some respondents claim that the program is inspiring because they are trained to serve their community voluntarily and sincerely. Shin and Kleiner (2003, in Intan and Sitio, 2016: 78) support this statement by stating that what makes volunteer different from office worker is that volunteer understands from the very beginning that the duty he/she commits on will not give him/her any reward. Thus, volunteers' motivation and earnestness are the keys to carry on their duties.

There are some problems that the respondents face during *Bimbingan Belajar* program. As the respondents tend to see the students as their *adik* (little brother/sister), they treat the bored or tired *adik* by offering games or telling stories. It creates bonding and adds the value of the program as Dahrendorf (1983, in Hajnalka and Gabriella, 2012:3) called as 'activity society'. The volunteers are mainly benefited from the values

coming from the process of participation. Then, the values will not only shape volunteers' personality, but also create greater benefit for a community and its members.

In terms of theme-based learning that is applied in the students' formal classes, the respondents see it as a 'down-to-earth' approach to daily cases that the students may encounter. They claim that theme-based learning helps the students to get focus on one issue and to explore it from different points of view. Sesorina (2014: 84) states that when a teacher employs theme-based learning in his/her class, he/she has invested in a meaningful contribution to students' life, especially young learners' life. She adds that sometime in the future, the topic discussed through theme-based learning will come up and students have already recognized way to deal with it.

As a follow up, the researchers conducted a training on making theme-based lesson plans for classes of *Bimbingan Belajar* program in *Rumah Belajar* KAGEM. The training was conducted in one day. In this training, the researcher employed Gallery Walking strategy to help KAGEM's volunteers to work on their lesson plans. The lesson plans mainly based on selected themes prepared by the researchers. The volunteers worked in pair and had to mind map their lesson plans that consist of goals, objectives, activities, media, and assessments. Subsequently, they walked around the room to check and to give input to other group's lesson plans. The researchers distributed a reflective sheet by the end of the training. The reflective sheet aimed to identify the volunteers' feedback on the materials given.

The respondents saw the pluses of the training as insights for planning a class ahead and the way to evaluate the students understanding on the given materials. They also see theme-based materials can help students to comprehend an issue from different perspectives. The respondents mention some minuses of the training, for example, lack of explanation on teaching procedure, material given during the training that may not suit the students in KAGEM, and time constraint that may affect students' comprehension. Thus, the solution is a careful selection on the delivered material. KAGEM's volunteers can refer to the national curriculum or books used in formal classes. Another solution is dividing the material into sections which may seem time and energy consuming but highly fulfilling. The abovementioned solutions have reflected what Wu (2011) states on volunteer's involvement. Wu believes that volunteer is an important contributor in delivering high quality public services.

As a final point, the respondents say that they gain insights from the training. They state that lesson plan is a good start for improving *Bimbingan Belajar* program. Respondents understand that preparation is essential in class handling, so they should be

able to make a structured and coherent lesson plan. The respondents also see the training has helped them to find an effective way to deliver material. They expect that by planning the lesson ahead, they can help the students to fully comprehend the material. Therefore, the result goes hand-in-hand with the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 103/2014 which states that lesson plan is a design of learning experience to meet the goal of the learning itself. Gunawan and Benty (2017, in Yuniawatika, et.al., 2017:106) also assert that the design should be rich in innovation and meet the subject's specification, as well students' learning environment (e.g. natural resources, local geniuses, society's needs, and science and technology developments).

Here, the researchers perceive the characteristic of KAGEM's volunteers as young people who enjoy being part of social projects and understand the commitment that they are engaged in. Rumah Belajar KAGEM offers experience and the volunteers offer their availability in return. Some of them may not immediately committed to the continuous schedule of *Bimbingan Belajar* program; yet, the others prove the opposite. A study by Stukas et.al. (2016) indicates that the socialization of young people with their surrounding communities helps to build their sense of belonging to the communities around them. Rumah Belajar KAGEM is geographically close to the main campus of Islamic University of Indonesia; therefore, it gives more access to its students to get involved to the institution's programs. Chances are more students from Islamic University of Indonesia will be part of volunteers in Rumah Belajar KAGEM Yogyakarta, as their seniors have shown them the examples. Consequently, KAGEM's board certainly needs to find the right strategies in maintaining the volunteers' loyalty, to keep the institution's programs run effectively.

Additionally, another characteristic of the volunteers of Rumah Belajar KAGEM is eagerness to learn. It can be seen from the volunteers' attention and involvement during the training. When they were assigned in group to make a theme-based lesson plan, they could accomplish the task collaboratively. They sometimes asked questions about the common content of a lesson plan (since the volunteers mostly came from non-education departments); yet, they managed to finished it. Here, the volunteers aimed at gaining new insight on managing *Bimbingan Belajar* program which would enable them to serve *Bimbingan Belajar's* learners better. The aforementioned characteristic has served at least three out of six motives for volunteering by Clary et.al. (1998, in Burns, 2011:12) namely enhancing and enriching personal development (esteem), learning new skills and practicing underutilized abilities (understanding), and expressing values related to

altruistic beliefs (value). These volunteers are expected to achieve the ultimate goals of volunteering activity, specifically, enriched soft skills and improved future livelihood.

5. Conclusions

The study covers two main points, namely observation and training on making theme-based lesson with the volunteers of Rumah Belajar KAGEM in Yogyakarta. From the observation, the researchers find that most of the volunteers enjoy working with Rumah Belajar KAGEM, especially in *Bimbingan Belajar* program. However, they still encounter some problems in regard to the way they deliver materials in class. The volunteers appreciate the use of theme-based learning, since it is an approach that is very close to real life condition. Subsequently, the researchers conducted a training on making theme-based lesson. From the reflection sheet, the researchers point out that the training has some advantages and disadvantages. However, the volunteers perceive the good sides of having a training about making lesson plan. Having a lesson plan is essential in handling a class and volunteers see it as a will in improving the quality of *Bimbingan Belajar* program. The researchers expect that there will be follow-up activities to observe the implementation of theme-based learning in Rumah Belajar KAGEM. It is also expected that volunteers working with KAGEM will be stable in number and hopefully improve, since the initial purpose of this community service program is to help the management of Rumah Belajar KAGEM in maintaining volunteers' loyalty.

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