INNOVATIVE LEARNING PRACTICES TO EMPOWER RURAL COMMUNITIES: A CASE STUDY OF A BALINESE NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Education is considered as an important tool for innovative development of rural areas. This paper aims to explore the practical usability of innovative learning models and their potentials to successfully channel the community development. A case study was employed to investigate the learning programs initiated to educate the rural community in Bali. The data for this case study was sourced from the results of in depth interviews and direct observations to various community education programs. The data was analyzed descriptively through content analysis to establish the basis for conceptualization of the innovative learning practices adopted by the Balinese community. This study found that a number of learning models deployed by the Balinese community to enhance their ability towards a new concept of sustainability. This study suggests that innovative learning helped to leverage the existing community knowledge to empower their ability to improve their life. This study is expected to delineate the basis of a framework for innovation in rural education and provide useful guidance for relevant researchers and practitioners, and could guide local community educators in Bali and other rural areas in Indonesia.

Keywords: Innovative learning; rural community; empower; non-formal education

1. Introduction

Education is one of the most important aspects of life. Having a good education is certainly very useful nowadays in gaining a better employment and also having the ability to create other forms of employment (Mantra, 2017).   Many businesses were established through having a good education in business and entrepreneurship, therefore people are now urged to attain higher education for the sake of a better life. People should have equal opportunity

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to get better education both those who live in the city and in the rural areas. As a matter of fact, rural community should be given more opportunity to get a good education in order they have more ability to maintain their life sustainability (Maba & Mantra, 2018; Widiastuti, 2016).

The Indonesian has put considerable effort to educate the rural community by giving them opportunity to learn various skills through non-formal education which are conducted by Learning foundation and nonprofit organization. The learning processes they usually carry out to educate the rural community are slightly different to those learning process that are usually conducted in formal education institution. Their learning process tends to be more fun, relax and suited to the local learning environment (Cahyani, Mantra, & Wirastuti, 2018). Fun learning certainly is more effective for learners. They feel relax and enjoy the learning activities (Zaini, Munthe, Aryani, 2008). Therefore this paper presents several teaching models which are usually implemented by educators in rural non formal education.

A learning process is a process that contains a series of executions by educators and learners on the basis of reciprocal relationships that take place in an educational situation to achieve a particular goal (Widiastuti, 2017; Mantra, 2017). Educators then constantly need to conduct appropriate assessment to ensure the attainment of the learning goal (Kunandar, 2013; Astawa, Mantra, Widiastuti, 2017). This interaction or reciprocal relationship between educators and learners is a key requirement for the ongoing learning process. If the learning process is more dominated by the educator, then the effectiveness of learning will not be achieved. To create effective learning conditions, educators are required to be able to manage the learning process that gives stimulus to the learners so that they are willing and able to learn (Maba & Mantra, 2017). To be effective learning everyone needs to know what the real learning means. Learning is an active action to understand and experience something. Learning is due to the interaction between stimulus and response. Thus, the learning process occurs when the child responds to the stimulus provided by the educator, in addition to achieving effective learning of learners can also be guided by the teacher from their previous knowledge which is stored in their memories and thinking (Cognitive) to use he theory and methods of learning appropriately. If that has not happened then the learning process will not run effectively and optimally (Mantra & Maba, 2017; Mantra, 2018). .

Educators have a very important role in determining quality in conducting learning in the classroom (Mantra, 2018). In connection with this task, educators should always think about efforts to improve the quality of learning, such as by making careful planning of learning

and preparing a set of appropriate learning tools (Astawa, Mantra, & Widiastuti, 2017). It can be concluded that learning is an activity undertaken by the educators in such a way, so that learner changes to a better direction. Learning aims to help students to gain experience and with that experience students develop their behavior which includes knowledge, skills, and values or norms that serve as controlling attitudes to grow in their life (Suparsa, Mantra, & Widiastuti, 2017). A successful educator is teaching learners how to have information to be creative (Strobel & Angela, 2009). While effective learners are having the ability to use the information, ideas and wisdom of their teachers and other learning resources effectively

2. Methods

A qualitative research approach was employed in examining and interpreting the data of this study in order to elicit empirical findings regarding the innovative learning models used by rural educators in non formal education systems to enhance the ability of the rural community. A multiple-case study was adopted to explore the innovative learning practices. In short, by using a multiple-case study approach, and also by limiting the number of selected cases, the data can be compared and contrasted within single cases in depth. By using a qualitative approach in analyzing the data, it enabled to develop a better understanding of learning models used. This multiple case study generates the style of description from each teacher, through interviews and, observations, video-assisted stimulated recall post observation interviews, and document analysis. As well as this each case is particularized as it focused on the individual roles of the interviewed teachers in the use of learning models in real classroom setting. Describing and interpreting the cases in their situational uniqueness provided different viewpoints of the same phenomenon. Observations sheet is the instrument used to collect the data regarding to the learning models practiced by rural educators and the impact of the learning models on students learning.

3. Results and Discussion

211

A competent teacher is a teacher who is able to manage the teaching and learning program. Managing a learning program has a broad sense of how a teacher is able to master basic teaching skills, such as opening and closing lessons, explaining, varying the media, asking, reinforcing, etc., as well as how teachers apply strategies, learning and learning theories. Each teacher must have adaptive competence to every development of science and progress in the field of education, both concerning improving the quality of learning and all matters relating to improving students' achievement.

Additionally, teachers should have comprehensive understanding and have the ability to implement appropriate learning model. Every Learning model requires different management systems and learning situation for each model. For example, problem based learning needs flexible class situation, the students' table should be able to move and easily arranged. In this model, the students will work in group to discuss and share with others to solve their problems. By developing various kinds of instructional model have more possibility to create teaching learning situation based on four basics of long life learning: (1) learn to know, (2) learn to do, (3) learn to live together, and (4) learn to be. Therefore, a system of a learning model consists of teaching learning procedures on how the teacher conveys the knowledge to the students. This study revealed that there are some Learning Models that are mainly used by rural educators in teaching such as Problem Based Learning (PBL), Direct Learning (DL), and Contextual Learning (CTL) based learning model.

Problem Based Learning

Based on the result of the observation to the learning program conducted by rural learning program, educator often employed Problem based learning to train the community to provide them some knowledge related to social knowledge, environmental knowledge, social economy, etc. This is understandable because Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a pathway to better learning, helping students to learn how to learn. This method motivates and challenges students to develop the ability to think critically, analyze problems, find and use appropriate learning resources. In line with student-centered learning, this method really makes the students learn to attain higher thinking ability. Students become more responsible to solve the problems they encountered in their class. Therefore it is hoped that their ability can be implemented in their daily life, moreover they are hoped to be more independent.

Problem Based Learning hereafter abbreviated as PBL is a learning activity which really encourages students to be active in learning. Students are involved in active learning, working with real problems and what they have to learn in their class is considered to be relevant to their daily life. In the PBL learning, students encounter a problem and attempt to solve it with information they have and practice their higher thinking process to solve the problem. Therefore they are not only familiar on how to solve the problems but they used to using higher level of comprehension as well as building up their ability to utilize their existing knowledge. Students are also exercising themselves to work together with their friends. Consequently, they learn how to respect other opinion and ideas to supplement their own existing opinion and ideas. Problem based learning put a strong emphasis on cognitive psychology and constructivism about learning. Constructivism theories of learning makes students more creative in discovering and creating new knowledge and skill for their life. The teacher needs to provide a conducive learning atmosphere to encourage students discovering and applying their ideas in learning activity.

The development of cognitive depends on the students' activity to interact in learning situation. The most important implementation of pieget in teaching are: (1) paying attention on the role of initiative and students' role as well as their interaction in learning activity. The teacher should prepare various kinds teaching learning activities enable students involved such as in presentation, debating, and conversation, (2) recognizing that students have different social backgrounds. They also have different intellectual development. The teacher should be able to organize the students in grouping work. These are important to be acknowledged in teaching the students to create meaningful learning situation.

Additionally, Problem Based Learning employs merely contextual learning principles, such as: (1) constructivism, the students learn through *constructing* rather than *memorizing,* (2) learning in community, the students work in group to discuss the problems and make a decision, (3) questioning, the students ask and share ideas with others while working in group. Students ask their friends in pair and also in group. (4) Reflection, students practice their new knowledge as reinforcement or revision from their own knowledge. (5) Modeling, the teacher acts as a model and facilitator.

Problem Based Learning is based on real problems that the students faced in their life**.** The learning activities of Problem based Learning are engaging students in problem solving

213

which are really complicated to be solved. Through focusing students in problem-based learning, they get used to solving problems deal with in their life. PBL model is a learning concept that helps teachers create learning environments that begin with important and relevant issues for learners, and enable learners to gain a more realistic learning experience. Problem-Based Learning involves learners in an active, collaborative, learner-centered learning process that develops the problem-solving and self-learning skills needed to meet the challenges of life and careers, in today's increasingly complex environment. Problem-Based Learning can also begin by doing group work among learners. Learners investigate on their own, find problems, and then solve the problem under the guidance of the facilitator (teacher).

Problem-Based Learning suggests learners to seek or determine relevant sources of knowledge. Problem-based learning provides challenges for learners to learn on their own. In this case, learners are more invited to form knowledge with little guidance or teacher direction while in traditional learning, learners are more treated as recipients of knowledge given structured by a teacher. Problem-based learning is one of the innovative learning models that can provide active learning conditions to learners. PBL is a learning model that involves students to solve a problem through the stages of a scientific method so that learners can learn knowledge related to the problem and also have the skills to solve the problem.

To achieve optimal learning outcomes, learning with Problem Based Learning model needs to be well designed from the preparation of issues that are in line with the curriculum that will be developed in the classroom, raising the problem of the learner, the equipment that may be required, and the assessment used. Teachers apply this approach should develop themselves through the experience of managing in their classrooms, through continuing training or formal education education. Therefore, problem-based teaching is an effective approach to teaching high-level thinking processes. This learning helps learners to process the ready-made information in their minds and develop their own knowledge of the social world and its surroundings. This learning is suitable for developing basic and complex knowledge.

Direct Instructional Model

Based on the interviews and direct observation to the subject of the study, it was found that Direct Instructional Model (DIM) is often used by many rural educators. Direct learning model is a learning model that emphasizes the mastery of concepts and behavioral changes by prioritizing the deductive approach through the following

characteristics: (1) direct transformation and skill; (2) learning oriented toward a particular purpose; (3) learning materials that have been structured; (4) a structured learning environment; and (5) structured by teachers. The educator acts as a transmitter of information and in this case the educator should use appropriate media, such as films, tape recorders, pictures, demonstrations, etc. The information conveyed can be either procedural knowledge (knowledge of how to implement something) or declarative knowledge, (factual knowledge of something, concept, principle, or generalization).

Direct learning is a learning model consisting of educator's explanation of new concepts or skills to students. The Direct Instruction model is based on behavioral learning theory that views that learning depends on experience including feedback. One application of behavioral theory in learning is the provision of reinforcement. Feedback to students in learning is a reinforcement that is the application of behavioral theory.

Direct learning model is the most effective program to teach basic skills, expertise in understanding a material and self-concept. Direct learning model is considered by educators, educators play an important role and dominant in the learning process. This reference refers to the teaching style in which educators are actively involved in carrying the content of the lesson to learners and teaching it to all learners in the classroom.

The direct teaching model allows students to learn by observing selectively, remembering and imitating what their teacher modeled. Therefore the important thing to be considered in applying the direct teaching model is to avoid conveying complex knowledge. In addition, direct teaching model emphasizes the declarative approach with emphasis on learning process to comprehend concepts and motor skills, thus creating a more structured learning atmosphere. Teachers using the direct teaching model are responsible for identifying the learning objectives, material structure, and basic skills to be taught. Then Educators are required to pass on knowledge to students, provide models/demonstration, give students the chance to practice applying learned concepts/skills, and provide feedback.

Contextual Teaching and Learning

Another teaching and learning model used by rural educators is Contextual Teaching and Learning. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model is influenced by a constructivist philosophy which holds that the essence of knowledge influences the concept of the learning process. Learning is not merely to memorize but to construct knowledge through experience. Knowledge is not the result of delivery from others like the teacher, but the result of the individual constructing process.

Learners construct knowledge in their own minds. According to constructivist view, the acquisition of one's experience from the process of assimilation and accommodation so that a more specialized experience is the knowledge embedded in the mind according to the one's schemata. The schemata is structured by the efforts of the individual learners who have relied on the one's schemata.

Contextual learning aims to help learners understand the subject matter they are learning by connecting the subject matter with its

application in everyday life. These can be in the following characteristics. First, creating meaningful connections and making connections between subjects with experience or between learning process and the real life of learners so that the outcomes become meaningful. Second, carrying out a meaningful work (doing significant work) Third, self-regulated learning, namely: (1) students learn through order or different way, they may have different interests and talents; (2) liberating learners using their own learning styles, processing in the way they are exploiting their individual interests and developing talents with varying intelligence according to their tastes; (3) the learning process involving learners in free action. This free action is designed to link academic knowledge with the context of everyday life of learners in achieving meaningful goals. This goal can be either visible or not. Fourth, collaborating (collaborating) the learning process that involves learners in a group, fifth, critical thinking and creative thinking.

Contextual learning practices include; (1) active learners; (2) learners learn from one learner to another through co-work, teamwork, and self-reflection; (3) learning relationships with the real world or issues of simulation and meaningful problems; (4) learners are responsible for monitoring and developing their own learning; (5) appreciating the learner's contextual approach and the experiences of previous learners are the basis of learning; (6) learners are active participation in the improvement of society; (7) learners' learning is assessed in various ways; (8) the perspective and opinions of learners are valued and valued; (9) the learner acts as a facilitator in the learning of learners; (10) learners using appropriate instructional techniques; (11) dynamic and fun learning environment; (12) emphasizes high-level thinking and problem-solving; (13) learners and learners are prepared to experiment with one's creativity approaches; (14) the learning process is as important as the context being studied; (15) learning takes place in settings and multiple contexts; (16) knowledge is interdisciplinary and expanded not only in the classroom; (17) educators accept their role as learners as well; (18) learners identify and solve problems in a new context.

Contextual Teaching and Learning is a teaching and learning concept that helps educators connect subjects with real situations and that motivates learners to link their knowledge and application to daily life as family members and the community. Contextual Teaching and Learning can also be called experiential learning, real world education, active learning, learner centered, instruction, and learning-in-context. Contextual Teaching and Learning is a blend of some good teaching practices and some previous approaches (Dewey concept, pragmatic, communicative and constructivist).

The discussion of the most used learning models by the community as described above strongly showed that problem based learning, contextual learning and direct learning become the highest interest and willingness to be used by rural educators. This is reasonably understood that those three learning models are considerably interactive and effective to be utilized for a big number of learners. Additionally, those three learning models are quite easy to implement but they allow some challenging activities to be created during the learning process by the educators.

4. Conclusion

Practical usability of innovative Learning models is significantly vital for all educators to comprehend. In modern teaching, educators are required to employ various learning models which contextually relevant to the learners' learning atmosphere. Consequently, educators should always improve their teaching competence through comprehending and utilizing effective learning models in their teaching practices. Being an educator is a very noble profession among other professions. Through patience and professionalism, an educator seeks to transfer all that he has to students tirelessly, every day and every time. An educator is always impeded to do renewal in performing his duties and role as a trusted source of knowledge. Through the implementation and modification of the learning model to be more effective and innovative models is expected learners become more independent generation, able to creatively and innovatively create something without having to imitate other nations.

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217

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