

Appreciative Inquiry towards the Learning Outcome of the Children

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Abstract: Children and parenting education are generally conducted separately. On the other hand, parenting education is basically undertaken to help the parents to facilitate children development optimally. Based on that thought, the researchers intend to do optimization on children education through learning group that involves parents' participation during the process. The research method is quasi experiment with quantitative approach through non-equivalent control group design. Children's learning groups that become the subjects are the groups that consist of 20 people of 6-12 years old divided to be two groups, which are 1) experimental group that consists of 10 children accompanied by their parents, and 2) control group that consists of 10 children without parents' companion. The results of the study are the outcome of Children's Learning Group using appreciative inquiry method through 1) Social Construction revealing that communication determined by parents and children is more intensive, 2) Image Theory stating that children have image on their future with hope and dream, 3) Grounded Research as the first step to make the children open to their parents, 4) Learning Initiative that make children start to be responsible for their tasks. Children's Learning Group that uses problem solving method produces the students able to express their experiences, analyze and determine the solution towards the problems experienced, find out and arrange the reasons taken in problem solving, and have courage to state their opinion in writing and orally, and respect the other opinions.

1 INTRODUCTION

Basically, human will experience natural developmental phases consisting of conception phase, infancy, childhood, puberty, and adulthood. There is interplay among those phases, the interplay between among life spans -e.g. (Yusuf, 2009). the earlier phase will influence the latter. Based on the statement, an effort to understand the characteristics of each developmental phase is necessary in order each phase will can receive proper treatment in school, society, or even family as the basic institution of education. As stated in a *hadits*, "No babe is born but upon *Fitra* (as a Muslim). It is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Polytheist."

Education as the process to transform values plays an important role in optimizing the realization of being *Fitra*. The effort to facilitate the child developmental phase is part of educational effort to help the child so that s(he) can be an individual who has self-concept which is realized in the forms of attitude and behaviour.

One of the women's organization in Asia-Pacific (*Pan Pacific South East Asia Women's Association*, PPSEAWA) in their 20th conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia concludes that "...around 40%-50% of the future generation is predicted to be broken home family due to divorce or the condition of living with a single parent" (Yusuf, 2009). This case may show that juvenile delinquency, violence, and crime will be more flourish.

In this article, the young generation refers to the one who is in the transition phase; i.e. from childhood to adolescent. G. Stanley Hall known as "*Father of Adolescence*" (in Yusuf, 2009) states that if the environment where the teenager grows up is conducive, the teenager will receive positive traits that will help him/her develop his/her human being's value. Furthermore, Hall also states that the social experience during the adolescent phase can control the teenager to internalize the traits that s(he) has received from the older generation.

Education is the process that can improve the capacity and capability of human beings by honing the skills they have. The skills should be enhanced

so that human can improve their life (Botte et al., 1990).

Unfortunately, the meaning of education today has been undermined. Education is defined as a process that only takes place in schools. Parents send their children to schools with the pragmatic expectations that their children can get better job. The education the parents understand here is only about formal education; in fact, the education in schools is limited to certain subjects that dictate the children to "read texts". Even though the curriculum in Indonesia is designed to form individuals with good personalities, the implementation of this curriculum still needs improvement. In the real world, the children are pushed to be able to survive while the education in schools still focuses only on basic knowledge.

Children as the asset have right to be treated very well. To draw an analogy of how precious children are, there are many terms that have been used, starting from "*bak kertas putih yang bersih, tinggal menunggu pena menorehkan corak diatasnya*" (children are analogous to blank white paper in which people can write down something on it to form what the paper will be. The other term describing children is "*seperti tanah lempung yang siap dibentuk oleh seniman*" (children are analogous as clay that an artist is ready to shape. There are many terms which are used, however, what people should understand here is that parents are the ones who will playing a role as the pen or artist.

Why should be the parents? This is a rhetorical question. A child is born to a father and mother which in turn these people will be called as parents. From the pre-conception phase, conception phase, to the baby comes into the world, parents will be the closet people to the child. The possibility for parents to influence their child is quite big. As an Indonesian proverb says, "*buah jatuh tidak jauh dari pohonnya*" (connately meaning that children will probably receive what their parents have, e.g. talent). The proverb emphasises the importance of parents to guide the children.

Unfortunately, there are still many parents who do not understand that they themselves are the most important one in the child developmental phase. Many parents think that education is the most important and responsible one in the child developmental phase, especially formal education. This notion has been held by parents for long time. Thus, when their children make mistakes, the parents will blame the school. Indeed, with its capacity, it would be impossible for the school to pay attention to the child developmental phase fully

because there are many children who need to be taken care of.

Education, basically, is something that people, without considering age or socioeconomic status, must and can receive (Yunus, 2005). However, in the real world, for some certain reasons the society ignores education. This case results from the society's view where they still put the other aspects, other than education, first. The society often consider education as school. Indeed, if the definition of education is studied deeper, education is defined as a process to improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes using approaches, methods, and certain ways. On the other hand, school is defined as an institution where the educational process takes places. This definition confirms that education and school are not the same.

The view forms the society's paradigm that school is an institution who bears responsibility for the process of forming children behavior and attitude. Thus, when children make mistake, the society tends to construct stigma related to the school. School is of course the institution which bears responsibility for the educational process, but it has limitations in terms of time and space. Indeed, if we are thinking of how the educational process goes, school is only a formal institution while society, especially family is the informal educational institution which provides more times for children to learn.

Many references show that parents are the main actors who are involved in the educational process of their children (Lareau, 1989). Therefore, the values that children hold will be influenced by the education the parents give. Nevertheless, many parents still do not understand and realize that their children's behaviour, attitude, and knowledge are influenced by theirs. Therefore, an effort to make parents understand and realize about this is needed. The reason to make parents understand and realize about their roles is because the children's optimal developmental process is not only the responsibility of school, but also society, family, especially parents

Parents' incomprehension of their own role and function relates to education and experience they have. Hence, the process to make the parents realize of their role and functions is necessary. The process to make the parents realize of their role and functions can be realized through the educational events for the parents as the main educator.

Generally, the process of parental education more focuses on problem-solving effort by bringing up ideas to show the issue. the effects of deficit paradigm in people's life are (Sudjana, 2010):

- Causing pain because people are forced to remember the mistakes they made in the past;
- Increasing defensive behavior such as accusing;
- Making people less confident to do positive things because the people's weakness is the one that will be focused on;
- Creating new vision is not common because people tend to emphasize the reality without reflecting their goals;
- Solving problems is not conducted in a serious way. People tend to make new problems.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a method offering individual or organizational development using constructive paradigm. This method has much success in developing some organizations the thesis that is revealed using AI through the story of company described by Whitney and Trosten is as follow (Whitney and Trosten, 2007):

AI changes organization to be free and vivid place, the members are so excited. They have positive power, creativity, and they are so incredible 2) AI enhances the organization's skill in a change.

Today, there are many institutions which have parental education. There is no informal or non-formal way available. The trend of parental education has also reached formal education. Children's learning group provides some facilities for the children developmental phase. In the process, this learning group is guided by a tutor by classifying children based on their age. This classification is conducted to optimize the children education. Children education and parental education generally are conducted in a separate way. Whereas the principle of parental education is to help parents facilitate the optimal development of the children (Lareau, 1989).

2 METHODS

The used research method is quasi-experimental method with quantitative approach. Quasi-experimental method is used since the researchers are not able to do full control towards the variable and experimental condition. The design employed in quasi-experimental study is non-equivalent control group. In the implementation, control or experimental group is given the pre-test and post-test (Sugiyono, 2011).

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The method of AI is conducted through some stages. 1) *Discovery* Making questions for the appreciative interview, conducting the interview, telling different stories, 2). *Dream* Conducting dialogue about dream, clarifying dreams, arranging dreams and documenting dream 3). *Design* Selecting the relevant supporting elements and strategy 4). *Destiny* Overviewing, communicating, and marking the achievements, listing potential attitude.

Those stages produce six kinds of freedom: a) freedom to be recognized in a relationship, freedom to be able to communicate with many parties, especially with parents, b) Freedom to be listened, c) Freedom to have dreams, d) Freedom to select when contributing to something, e) Freedom to act with some supports, f) Freedom to be positive.

The target after receiving the AI method is viewed from the change 1) *Social constructionism* views the intensive communication between parents and children 2) *Image / image theory* states that children have image relating to their future and dreams, 3) *Grounded Research* refers to the first step to make children want to communicate with the parents, 4). Initiative to learn, children realizes that they have responsibility for their job.

Problem solving refers to an effort to describe experience or problem that people conduct to draw attention or get sympathy from the others (Berny, 2012)

The implementations of problem solving method toward the target using an approach are as follow: 1) Focusing on problems, 2) Looking for the alternative, 3) Arranging some efforts to solve the problems, 4) Realizing the efforts to solve the problems, 5) Valuing the effort in solving the problems (Lareau, 1989).

The use of *Problem Solving* method results in: 1). The participants can use their experience as the material, 2). The participants attempt to analyze and determine their attitude to face the problems, 3). The participants learn to look for and make some reasons of the attitude and solutions to solve the critical problems, 4). The participants are ready to give their opinion in the form of written or oral texts, they also appreciate the other's opinion.

Testing *Appreciative Inquiry* can give feedback for the development of body of knowledge about the freedom to think and have the future view and the positive change (Whitney and Trosten, 2007). On the other hand, the implementation of *Problem solving method*, refers to a process using strategies,

ways, or certain techniques to face new situation so that the situation can be handled well.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The development of learning method for children is one of children's character and personal development processes. Appreciative Inquiry method emphasizes positive values, thus children will have confidence and plan to create their future. Meanwhile, the use of problem solving method carries the children on encountering their troubles so that they are able to handle them individually or together.

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