106

IMPROVING HIGHER EDUCATION INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY: CREATING MEANINGFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Alexon
[1]Bengkulu University, Dept.of Education Science, Indonesia.
e-mail: alexonibrahim@yahoo.com

Abstract
The objectives of this paper were to find out and analyze the concept of significant learning appropriately which could support higher education involvement to prepare students to adapt in educational community. Descriptive-qualitative approach was used in this paper. The result of the paper showed that firstly, there were six domains of meaningful learning at higher education which had relational connection and interactive activity, namely; foundation knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. Secondly, to implement it, there were three steps for meaningful learning; they were (a) building significant main components; (b) arranging the components to a rational component holistically; and (c) finishing other important final tasks.

***Keywords**: Higher Education Involvement, Educational Community, Meaningful Learning*

INTRODUCTION

Till now mostly teaching and learning process is still done conventionally in most of higher education level in Indonesia. Text-book oriented in teaching and learning process is still dominant, while most lectures now tend to imitate their former favorite lecturers in form of teaching style, model, and material as well. Learning at higher education follows old style which is teacher/lecturer-centered. Dealing with the old learning style, Abdulhak (2015: 11) states that obtained knowledge and skill is often separated from their contexts. This traditional learning style can ensure students to be away from society. Higher education should boost society empowerment to solve the problems which related to complicated challenge of national living.

Educational community stresses on the importance of encouraging of society empowerment. Educational community is centered on society. Sudjana (2007: 360) mentions that educational community leads to learning activity approach which makes students realized about imbalanced issues in living of society. The focus of educational community is giving knowledge, skill, and attitude which enables society can solve society's problem happening in their surroundings.

In higher education, an agenda of student's orientation toward society's problem is as if it happened only on Community Service (KKN). Community service is oriented on giving learning experience to students who living outside the campus and it also

identifies and solves the problems of society. However, the community service is held sporadically with its time limits, unsystematically and non integrative ways. Therefore, it is hard to give holistically capability of society to students. This condition leads to community service less effective. Therefore, some higher education in Indonesia modifies, innovates or even eliminates the community service program and substitutes it with other society services which more representative. .

Traditional learning which focuses on institution, lecturer and community service is not always bad sporadically; at least it increases the efficiency of using sources, facilities, and teaching staffs. However, it is difficult for students to get learning experiences. Individual and social needs of students cannot be fulfilled or not accommodated well because science and technology or even values of society are getting shift and change.

There are parts of lecturers have innovated their teaching and learning, but no all lecturers who involved in world education have the same attentions on learning practice. They just think about what thing that they can give to students instead of thinking about whether students have received meaningful information or no from them. On the other hand, they also realized that faculty staffs, students and even societies are not satisfied with the quality of learning at higher education level.

Learning problems at Indonesian higher education can be seen from three aspects, namely institution, student, and society. Firstly, from institution aspect, here institution sees the students as lazy ones, particularly in reading obligated references. Low participation in class, students only focus on grade achievement instead of learning process. Book's function is too dominant. Many lecturers are getting frustrated and lose their motivation because of the problems. They want to change those things but they don't have any supports from institution or even students. Secondly, from student's aspect, teaching and learning conducted by lecturers are not interesting and monotonous. The students just come,sit, listen, write down, and then take an exam. They find difficulties to get a meaning or value from what they have learned. Thirdly, from society aspect, society suspects the quality of higher education is low. Outcomes of higher education are not relevant with society's need. The society demands that the higher education can give meaningful education for students.

Considering those problems above, it is very crucial to create meaningful learning experiences at higher education so that the higher education are more involved in developing student's readiness to build a educational community.

In the past, integrated approach in designing meaningful learning experience is seen as if it is suitable for elementary and middle school. There is an assumption that meaningful learning experience is not appropriate for higher education because the higher education should be professional and master certain specified skills. .

However, in certain limitation and also for a learning process reason, a lecturer, of course with his/her autonomy and supported by institution (faculty/major/study program), can design an integrated learning to create meaningful learning experience for students.

Integrated approach in creating meaningful learning experience is here oriented on improving the process of teaching a subject conducted by a lecturer with making

certain themes without changing structure of curriculum institutionally and lecturer's autonomy.

With autonomy on their hands, institution (faculty/major/study program) can release a regulation and policy to rise up lecturer's motivation to compete in their learning innovation, especially to implement the principal integration and meaningful learning.

To sum up, there are at least three main issues which relates to concept of creating meaningful learning experience at higher education to prepare student's readiness in building educational community, namely; meaning learning experience, design of integrative learning, and institutional support.

DISCUSSION

1. Learning Model for Developing Meaningful Learning Experience.

Meaningful learning is a process of learning which emphasizes on learning by doing, full participation of students, communication ability, and work competency. Students who encountered meaningful learning will be able to think critically, be able to synchronize what he/she think into their life, and be able to work together with other people in worldwide.

Students who are adaptable toward educational community should be prepared with characteristics of meaningful learning in learning process at higher education. The characteristics consists of learning by doing, active participation in learning process, integrative program, and produce changes in considering and solving the society's problem.

Table1. The characteristics of Meaningful Learning Experience

Dimension	Remarks
Process	• *Engaged* : teaching and learning process done while working • *High Energy* : Class is always in higher level of energy (full attention of students)
Outcomes	Meaningful and oriented on changing: Education makes something useful for students, continuous change after following a learning or education.
Values in life	What students learned can make students thinking critically and has high potential to be used in their life, before and after they graduate. For instance, helping to increase their quality of life, preparing them to participate in communication, or prepare them to work.

2. The Foundation of Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, and Science and Technology of Meaningful Learning Experience

There are some main foundations in developing a curriculum; they are philosophy, psychology, sociology, and science and technology (Sukmadinata, 2010: 38). Meaningful learning experience as a model is also part of curriculum. Therefore, model of meaningful learning experience also has foundation of philosophy, psychology, sociology, and science and technology.

a. Philosophy Foundation of Meaningful Learning Experience

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In general, there are eight parts of philosophy which influence education world, curriculum and learning, those are: idealism, realism, perennialism, essentialism, existentialism, pragmatism-progressivism, constructivism and educational philosophy which has advanced progress in last two decades is constructivism. The part of philosophy discussed here is only philosophy which has closed relationship with meaningful learning experience.

In meaningful learning experience, the process is highly stressing on learning by doing and students' full participation in achieving the goals of education-there is a change on individual after taking certain subjects. If it is connected to the opinion of Miller & Seller (1985: 4-9), meaningful learning experience includes into transaction position in curriculum. This position explains that education is basically interaction among students to students, lecturers, curriculum and environment. The main principal of curriculum is its orientation on cognitive process. democracy (in process of solving the problems), and discipline of science (mastering science that has been studied)

It is then mentioned by Miller & Seller (1985: 7) that philosophy foundation of transaction position is pragmatism of John Dewey who states that science of knowledge can be used to solve the problems which happened in society. There are four points in that pragmatism, (1) democracy and education, (2) growth as an aims of education, (3) problem solving, and (4) progressive education

In meaningful learning experience, a student also constructs his/her own knowledge as the result of interacting between knowledge that he/she has with the external environment in form of past learning experiences so that it can creates a new understandable knowledge. It is closely related to the principle of constructivism.

b. Psychology Foundation of Meaningful Learning Experience

Meaningful learning emphasizes on cognitive process, students' activities, internal and external students' interaction, and change after learning process. Therefore,the psychology foundation of meaningful learning experience is learning psychology, social psychology, progressive psychology. Learning psychology will help our understanding about students' learning process psychologically while social psychology will help our psychology about interaction between student and student, student and lecturer, and student and his/her environment. Meanwhile, development psychology will give us understanding about students' progress time by time.

Sukmadinata (2010 : 46) firms that there at least two psychology foundation on developing curriculum and learning, they are learning psychology and progressive psychology. What learning strategies which can give significant result and how to do it are parts of studying learning psychology. On the other hand, discussion about individual progress since he/she was born until grew up is a part of progressive psychology. In addition, Sukoco (2002: 80) adds that social psychology gives foundation to learning which reveals the importance of teamwork.

c. Sosiology foundation of Meaningful Learning

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One of the main characteristics of meaningful learning producing something values for students which can be useful for them to increase their quality of life, to participate, to communicate and to prepare them to work. Meaningful learning is also oriented on both individual useful values or others and it pays attention to individual differences because every student has different cognitive structure so that they have differences in construct their own knowledge as well. This heterogeneity is a description of various societies which becomes main feature of educational community.

d. Science and Technology Foundation of Meaningful Learning

Donation in form of using and applying technology of certain science toward other fields of science is called technology. Technology is the way to do something to fulfill human needs with tools and mind (hardware & software) so that it looks like it can extend, empower, or even make human bodies and brain more sophisticated.

In meaningful learning, foundation of science and technology is described on learning innovation. Integrative design on meaningful learning is an example of technological aspect (software) in meaningful learning. Design or integrative approach enables it to integrate curriculum, student's need, interest of institution and lecturer, society, environment and technology—software and hardware—so that it can produce meaningful experience for students as an effort to gain aims of education which will be implemented in educational community.

3. New Paradigm of Learning at Higher Education

Shifting of education paradigm will happens in century of 21. Griffin (2012: 2) expresses that "Education face a new challenge: to provide the populace with the information skills needed in an information society. Education systems must adjust, emphasis information and technological skills, rather than production-based". A great change of world education in century of 21 lies on skills on work field. Work field more demands a higher order thinking in the future, while ordinary works will be left behind.

In century of 21, preparing students to be qualified human who have higher order thinking so that he/she becomes a grad of higher education who is creative, innovative, critical thinker, faster decision maker, and smart learner, is very important. In line with that point, Ali (2012: 102) expresses that advanced of human quality is a successful key for developing.

A new paradigm on work world gives impact on the change of learning paradigm at higher education. Many experts expresses about this new learning paradigm. In short, they believe that the paradigm more emphasizes on learning instead of teaching with students as its center. Schrum (2012: 16) states that students should be a teacher for themselves. This paradigm shift implies on shifting on items operationally can be seen on table 2 below.

Table2. The shift of the Teaching Paradigm to the Learning Paradigm

Aspects	The Teaching Paradigm	The Learning Paradigm
Mission and objectives	Modifying of teaching quality	Modifying of learning quality
Criteria of Achievement	Input quality	Output quality
Structure of teaching and learning	Tend to extend	Learning outcomes are more specific
Learning Theory	Learning is cumulative and linear	Learning is holistically frame and interactive
Productivity and Cost	Definition of productivity is counting of cost per hour of learning activity of each student.	Cost of each unit of learning per student.
Students	Passive	Active constructor, inventor, and transformer of knowledge"
Mode of Learning	Emphasizing on recall	Emphasizing on meaning (an ability to create connection among concepts.

From the paradigm shift above, it is then appeared meaningful learning models which takes a new paradigm. Hasan (2012: 65) gives a term for meaningful learning as a learning which gives an opportunity for students to have essential knowledge which can be used anytime.

Many experts then express that new paradigm as mentioned above mainly concern on integrative learning approach in order to create meaningful learning experiences for students.

4. Taxonomy of Meaningful Learning

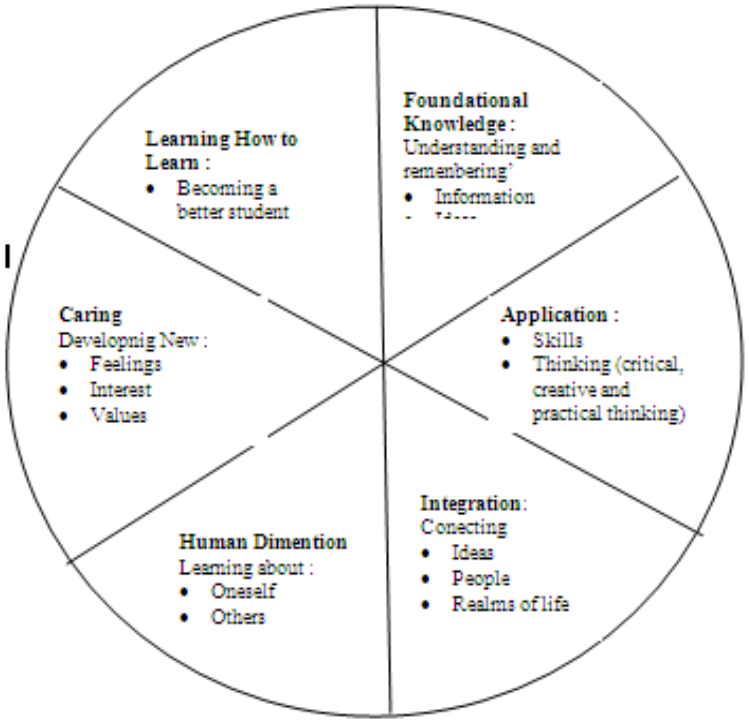
Many lecturers and educators design a learning based on Bloom taxonomy (Cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) and cognitive domain is more dominant to use. This Bloom taxonomy is commonly used to formulate the aims of education and learning.

There is no problem with Bloom's taxonomy, but if we talk about meaningful learning experience, then there is something new which should be added. More accurate statements and clear description of what meaningful learning wants are needed because it relates to many things at higher education like teaching staffs, students, administrators and so forth.

Based on the explanation above, then it is needed a new description of meaningful learning taxonomy. In construct process of this taxonomy, guidance about obvious learning perspective is needed. Fink (2003: 29-30) shows that learning is a term which correlates with changing. Learning happens if a change happens to students. No changing means no learning. Meaningful learning requires various kinds of important changing at the end of learning process which relates to meaningfulness for student's life. The taxonomy covers six domains of meaningful learning, they are:

Picture1. Taxonomy of Meaningful Learning

Main categories of the learning taxonomy above are first,**foundation knowledge**. Most of learning types are based on students' needs to know something. Knowing here refers to student's ability to understand and recall ideas and specific information. It is important because the students must have valid basic knowledge such as science, history, geography, reference and other aspect of its world. They also need basic material like what revolution is and which one is not revolution and so on. Special value is foundation knowledge which gives basic understanding needed to achieve other kinds of learning.



Second, **Application**. Besides understanding the facts or ideas, students are also expected to apply them intellectually, physically or even socially. How students can work in several of thinking (critical, creative and practical) is the important form of learning application. Things which include into significant learning category are developing certain skills such as doing communication, playing a piano or studying on how manage complicated activities. Special value is learning application can enable other learning become meaningful.

Third, **Integration.** When students have an ability to see and understand the relationship between different things, it means that kind of learning has happened. They start connecting among ideas specifically, between ideas realism, among human beings or even between the reality of life(between school and worker, between school and happiness). Special value is an action creates new connections which give students forms of new ability, particularly intellectual ability.

Fourth, **Human Dimension**. When students study something which is important about them, it shows that function and interaction has been done effectively on them.

What they have learned giving a new understanding about themselves or their vision—what they want to be. In other words, they have more understanding about other people—how to interact effectively with other people. Special value: this kind of learning will shape students to be meaningful human beings, not only for her/him but also for others and his/her environment.

Fifth, **Caring**. Learning experience will change level of student's understanding about something. This change or development is the form of reflection in term of feeling, interest, or new values. This change makes students feel more meaningful than before. **Special value**: when students consider something more meaningful for their life, it then rises up more new energy to keep up studying and do something as an important part of their life. Learning without energy/motivation, meaningful is nothing.

Sixth, **Learning How to Learn**. In their studying, students can also learn something about the process of learning itself. They have to learn on how to be a good student, how works with inquiry or how to be learning leader for themselves. Those are all about the importance of "learning how to learn". **Special value**: this learning type enables students to study for whole life and always work effectively.

One important thing of the taxonomy above is that the relationship is not hierarchical but relational and interactive activities. The diagram shows us the characteristics of interactive of meaningful learning. This diagram is more dynamic and shows that each type of learning in taxonomy is connected each other and the successfulness of certain learning type will determine other successfulness. Why are interaction and interrelation among types of learning so important? Lecturers must prepare learning materials which is mutual integrative and mutual interrelation because meaningfulness is born from several of learning types. If a lecturer helps students to attain certain types of learning, it means that the lecturer must push the students to understand other learning types. For instance, if a lecturer finds a method to help students solveing their problem, that is by using information or ideas in form of activity application. It is easier to understand by students if students can connect the information or ideas effectively with their interest, feeling and values (caring), or leading students to find the relationship between ideas and information (integration) so that the students can look at its value easily whether for themselves or other people (human dimension).

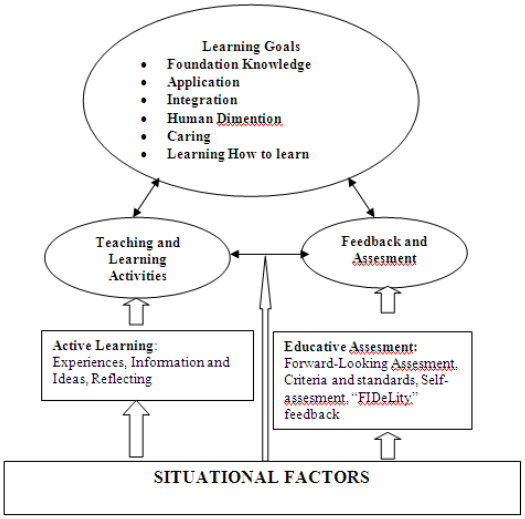
5. Integrative Approach in Designing Meaningful Learning

Integrative learning approach has the same characteristics as other integrative models, including some keys component but of course, there are also some differences on big line among the components. Integrative approach stated by Fink (2003: 60-120) shows there is difference from other models. The differences exist if the model is relational, not linear, that's why called integrative. This model has formulation of designing process which has some features as follow:

- Simple: it is relatively easy for teachers to remember the basics of model.
- Holistic : making something complicated to be more exist in certain effective design
- Practical: can be done based on necessity
- Integrative: showing interactive relationship among the components.

- Normative: there is a specific criterion to determine whether the design is good or bad.

The basic characteristics of the integrative shows on picture 2 below. Situational factors refer to information about necessity which should be collected; meanwhile three circles (key components of meaningful learning) shows how collected information is further managed. Information available on situational factors is then used in the process of designing other three components to take a decision.



Picture2. Key components of designing integrative learning

(Adapted from Fink, 2003)

6. The Procedures of Integrative Approach in Developing Meaningful Learning Experience

Integrative approach discussed here consists of three phases. Each phase contains sub steps as you can see at the table below. First phase is called initial phase. This initial phase describes about how design process begins. Second phase is called intermediate phase) and the last phase is called final phase which describes the activities of student's actual experience which will be undertaken during education process.

There are some steps for designing integrative approach. Lecturer had better work step by step in order way because every step becomes basic step for the next step.

Table 3. Twelve steps for Designing Integrative Approach for Developing Meaningful Learning Experience at Higher Education

Phases	Remarks
Initial Phase	Building important main components: 1. Identifying important situational factors 2. Identifying an important learning. 3. Formulating feedback and appropriate assessment procedure 4. Choosing effective teaching and learning activities 5. Rechecking to make sure that those main components above have been integrated.
Intermediate Phase	Arranging the component to rational one as a whole. 6. Formulating the structure of learning themes 7. Choosing and determine learning strategy 8. Integrating material structure and learning strategy into scheme of learning activities holistically.
Final Phase	Finishing other important final tasks: 9. Developing the grading system 10. Anticipating possible problems which may appear in designing 11. Writing syllabus down 12. Designing learning evaluation

There are three important things which can be concluded from the explanation above:

- Integrative approach designed in that model can be implemented operationally so that it supports the development of meaningful learning experience for students.
- Lecturer can arrange learning materials with the agenda meaningful learning
- This approach can distinguish which the goal of meaningful learning is and which one is not through components of"active learning" and"educative assessment".

7. Meaningful Learning and the Involvement of Higher Education in Educational Community

Application of learning model to develop meaningful learning experience for students still needs an analysis and conceptual study. It needs strong analysis of theory and practice to know the relationship between learning model which develops meaningful learning and institution's involvement to prepare adaptive students with educational community. Dealing with that statement above, there will be two items which are relevant with those problems above, namely (1)the nature of education for students as an individual and social creature who needs meaningfulness in learning process, and (2) relationship between learning model which can develop student's meaningful learning experience and their involving in educational community.

If the nature of education is analyzed, it is truly only on human beings who need education among creatures of God. Dealing with this statement, Gaffar (2012 : 35) expresses that education is sticking on and a part of human living. Therefore, it can be concluded that the nature of education is an effort to humananize human. Tilaar (2000 : 189) borrows RomoMangunwijaya's opinion states that educational process has two aspects which mutual complement each other, namely hominazation and humanization

process. Education as hominazation fulfills human needs as a biological creature. Besides hominazation process, educational practitioner consists of humanization activities which consider human as social creature (human being). Humanization process gains its peak on educated and civilized human being.

At higher education, the nature of education is humanizing students. The students should study through process of hominization and humanization when they take their education at higher education. The process of hominization and humanization has close relationship with the necessity to develop meaning learning experience for students at higher education. Therefore, learning model to develop meaning learning experience for students at higher education is the nature of learning for students. This learning model gives an opportunity for students to encounter learning both at the class and outside the class (society) in balanced way. The process of learning by doing and student's full attention are the ways to produce science, insight, and high skill which will be useful for student's life either as individual or even as social creature. As a matter of fact, the nature of education such this becomes the focus of educational community.

Based on explanation above, it can be summarized that students as an individual and a social creature need more meaningful educational process which can develop their ability as a biological and social creature proportionally. Therefore, teaching and learning of students which happened in the past were dominated in the class (practitioner) has shifted to education which gives chance for students to immerse in society. This interest is based on the logical reasons below (1) can give learning experience about society's problem, and (2) give direct experience to find, formulate, solve the problems of society through integrative approach (interdisciplinary)

Main power or the strength of this learning model is integrative program which focuses on student's need whether they are as an individual or as social creature which has high potential to be used and be useful to increase the quality of student's life. The weakness of this model is not obligated and very situational.

CLOSING

The learning model to develop meaningful learning experience is a model of student's learning which conducted through learning by doing), supported by full participation of students, and expected to make continuous change and can be useful for students to increase their the quality of life, their communication, and their work ability. Taxonomy of meaningful learning consists of six domain which has close relationship interactive activities, namely foundation knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring and learning how to learn.

Integrative approach in creating meaningful learning experience at higher education has formulation of process design with its characteristics such as simple, holistic, practical, integrative and normative. This approach consists of three phases, initialphase (building important main components), intermediate phase (arranging components into rational one as a whole) and final phase (finishing other important final tasks)

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