Work Values Cultivation and its Relevance to the Development of the Life Skills of Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Work values cultivation represents a model that is developed in skills learning and has a relevance to the development of the life skills of junior high school students. The study aims at investigating the use of the work values cultivation and its relevance to the development of the life skills of junior high school students. It employs ex-post facto method, which is a model that applies intervention in skills learning by integrating the work values. Its sample is 210 junior high school students and its data is collected using questionnaire, observation and documentation. The data is analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study show that: (1) the understanding of the work values in practical learning can enhance students’ appreciation and (2) the cultivation of the work values can broaden the entrepreneurial insight as clearly observed in the application of the aspects of honesty, leadership and decision-making, cooperation, collaboration and synergy, creativity, and anticipation and also problem-solving capability that are relevant to life skill values.

Key words: work values understanding, work appreciation, entrepreneurial insight and life skills.

Introduction

In the era of human being as capital, human resources play an increasingly important role. Therefore, the new assumptions that are developed must be more consistent with the reality that human being must make any possible effort to achieve a much better and brighter tomorrow because the failure to make adjustment to the reality will result in the loss in completion. The present era demands not only the human resources with highly competitive hard skills, but also the reliable soft skills (i.e., managerial skills) in occupational world.

Concerning with the aforementioned reality of the present development, our educational system must make self-reposition in order to prepare the human resources who are able to compete in the existing job market. Such reposition must be made as early as possible, which is at elementary education that represents the foundation in the work values cultivation in order to enhance students’ appreciation. The fact is that learning at school nowadays puts more emphasis on cognitive aspect at knowledge level and is ignorant of students’ creativity issues (Suyanto & Djihad Hisyam, 2000). Such phenomenon is clearly observed in the educational process from elementary school to higher school. The results of the study by Djar Noviar (2009) indicate that teachers are likely to transfer science in cognitive domain and pay less attention to affective and psychomotor aspects that the later aspects have not given significant impact on the achievement of junior high school students. It is probably the causal factor of the low creativity and independence of our graduates. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate a development model of work values learning relevant to the life skills of the students in order to correct such condition as early as possible.

Work Values Cultivation:

There are many definitions of value. According to Lourder & Joy de Leo (2005), value is an ideal that provides one with meaning as reflected in his or her consistent preference and choice. R. Brat et al. (1995) suggests that value is the goal to meet in satisfying needs. For him job preference is an effort to maximize the satisfaction of the need by materializing its value. Brown (2002: 48) is convinced that individuals embrace certain value system, consisting of cultural values and work values, all of which can influence carrier decision-
making. The results of Dasman Lanin’s study (2004) in Sri Wening (2007) conclude that values education is very important because it provides students with supporting power in their learning and daily life. It is proven that attitude and behavior play an important role in the character building and hence it is necessary to further study them in the essential framework of values education as one of the observing indicators.

According to Isaacson (Bruder, 2004), work values may be interpreted as any activity that produce products and services. The essence of work puts the emphasis on the resulting products and services. Sverko et. al. (2008: 539) suggests that work values are what one considers as important in his or her occupational world. Meanwhile, Kraska (1993) suggests that work values are part of the broader term “vocational ethics”, and include an individual’s beliefs, attitude and behaviors which affect and contribute to the guiding principles and overall values of the workplace. It means that work values represent one of the parts of the vocational ethics that is believed by individuals and guide them in their attitude and behavior in accordance with the existing values in the occupational world.

Vocational ethics may be cultivated in students through the cultivation of the work values in skills learning at school. Buck and Barrick (1987) suggest that the mastery of the work values is achieved through learning process and it will result in the positive working behavioral changes. The opinion emphasizes the importance of attitude building in entering occupational world. In the context human life, working represents one of the important aspects of healthy adult life regardless of when and where they are. Dawis and Lofquist (R. Brat, 1995) considers the work values as very important standard for individuals. The work values influence the work preference and more important is that they result in work satisfaction. It means that the standard of individuals’ capability highly depends on what values they embrace.

Rokeach’s values survey (1973) classifies values into two, which are: terminal and instrumental. The first refers to the desired final existential state that represents the goals to meet in individuals’ whole life, while the second refers to the preferred behavioral modus or the way to achieve the terminal values. Practically, dominant instrumental values are used as the requirements in occupational world.

Based on the above opinion, the correlation between the work values and the work can be established when the students has a perception of work areas that they are interested in one of the work areas. Thus, it is necessary to cultivate the work values as early as possible in the students at school. According to Sri Wening (2007) the values education is intended to help the student understand, recognize, and experience the values and place them as an integral part of their life.

Through the cultivation of the work values in each of the skills learned at school and implemented in daily life, the students will recognize the importance of learning and they will deeply understand the meaning of what they have learned. In order to improve students’ understanding of the work values during the learning process, Lewin’s theory of behavior production function (Farley & Gordon, 1981: 83), is integrated in learning process in 3 modified forms, which are: (1) introduced work values, (2) offered work values, and (3) convinced work values.

It is expected that the pre-vocational education intended to develop can cultivate the work values that are able to guide the students in choosing their future carrier. When they are able to make a right choice for their future carrier, it will help them determine the appropriate school for the continuation of their study. It is necessary to help them make a right choice of the school based on their interest that they can successfully achieve their ideal. The cultivation of the work values is conducted by preparing a report of what they have done, describing the production process of what they have managed to produce, products exhibition, evaluating the products they have managed to produce, and asking questions about the success and the failure of the products as valuable experience.

The cultivated work values are relevant to life skills. Life skills for BBE Team (2002) are individuals’ ability that enables them to be willing to dare life problems in a normal manner without any pressure and then proactively and creatively find the solution of the problems. The life skills are given to the students that they are prepared and well-equipped to survive the coming development (Slamet PH, 2005). BBE Team (2008) classifies the life skills into five, which are: self awareness, thinking skills, social skills, academic skills, and vocational skills.

The self awareness includes experiencing self as God’s creature, member of society and state, and being grateful of whatever advantages and disadvantages one has as the capital for self-development and in order to deliver usefulness for his or herself and for his or her environment. The thinking skills include information searching, information processing and decision making skills and also creative problem solving. The social skills include communication skills and collaboration skills. The academic skills are often referred to as scientific thinking ability that includes among others variable identification skills, hypothesis formulation and research organization. The vocational skills include the skills related to certain occupational areas in a society.
Research methodology:

The study employs ex-post facto method, which is a model that applies an intervention in skills learning through the integration of the work values in education process using success stories. The respondents involved in the study are 210 junior high school students. The data is collected using questionnaire and analyzed using the descriptive statistics of SPSS program.

Results and discussion

Work Appreciation:

The appreciation of the work values is developed in the skills learning, including: appreciation value internalization, work value awareness, and work appreciation in occupational world.

a. Values Internalization:

The results show that the cultivation of the work values at the skills learning in junior high school enhances the appreciation of the work values from the point of view of values internalization, work values awareness, and the appreciation of the resulting products. It means that the cultivation of the work values in the practical learning can enhance the appreciation of the work values of the students that is relevant to the values of life skills.

b. Values Awareness:

The results of the analysis of the Graph 2 indicate that the aspects of the awareness of the respondents of selling value, the awareness of quality value, and the awareness of working value are scored >35% on average in the direct working practice.

c. The Appreciation of Work:

The results of the analysis of the Graph 3 indicate that the work appreciation of the respondents of the products they have managed to produce highly stimulate their concern as clearly observed in the appreciation level of work that is in general classified in the categories Care and Highly Care.

The Graph 1 illustrates values internalization from the point of view of neatness, beauty, and carefulness that have in general implemented by the students in their skills practice as manifested in the average percentage > 50%.
Chat. 3: The Percentage of work appreciation

2. Entrepreneurship:
a. The Implementation of Honesty Aspect:

The results of the analysis of the Graph 4 indicate that the respondents always implement honesty in their practical learning. It is also the case of precision implementation that is well-implemented.

b. Leadership and Decision-making:

The Graph 5 indicates that the leadership and the collective decision-making aspects have been implemented at the cultivation of the work values in the learning process. It is clearly observed in the values that are in the categories Implemented and Always Implemented.

d. Cooperation, Collaboration and Synergy:

The Graph 6 indicates that the aspects of cooperation, collaboration and synergy have been implemented at the cultivation of the work values in the learning process. Building good work attitude is always implemented, the practical rules are followed, and cooperation is well-established. It is clearly observed in the value that is in general in the category Always Implemented.
e. Creativity:

Chat. 6: The Percentage of cooperation, collaboration and synergy level

Chat. 7: The Percentage of Creativity

The Graph 7 indicates that concerning with the creativity dimension at the cultivation of the work values in the learning process, the respondents generally have their own tricks in their practical work, new ideas raises in the practical work, and they look for new methods in their practical work.

f. Anticipation and Problem-solving Capability:

Chat. 8: The Percentage of anticipation and problem-solving capability

The Graph 8 indicates that the dimension of anticipation and problem-solving capability have been met at the cultivation of the work values in the learning process. The aspects of Challenge as Advancement Step and Today Is Better than Yesterday are considered as very important by the respondents, while the availability of products in the entrepreneurial activities is considered to be important by the respondents.

The results show that the cultivation of the work values at the skills learning in junior high school can broaden the entrepreneurial insight as clearly observed in the aspects of the implementation of honesty, leadership and decision-making, cooperation, collaboration and synergy, creativity, and also anticipation and problem-solving capability. The findings are indicative of the fact that the cultivation of the work values in practical learning can broaden the entrepreneurial insight of the students, which is relevant to the values of life skills.

Conclusion:

Based on the results and the discussion of the study of the development of the cultivation model of the work values, it is concluded that: (1) the cultivation of the work values at the skills learning in junior high
school can enhance the appreciation of the work values as clearly observed in the aspects of values internalization, work values awareness, and the appreciation of the resulting products, (2) the cultivation of the work values at the skills learning in junior high school can broaden the entrepreneurial insight of the students as clearly observed in the implementation of the aspects of honesty, leadership and decision-making, cooperation, collaboration and synergy, creativity, and also anticipation and problem-solving capability relevant to the values of life skills.

Reference


