

Putting transformative learning in higher education based on linking capital

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze learning at the level of higher education. The practice of higher education, of course, also requires a transformation of learning. It is intended to achieve the competencies needed in the 21st century. The study used a qualitative approach. Observations were made on online learning practices at Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin, Indonesia from March to May 2021. In-depth interviews employed with 17 students who live in Banjarmasin. Miles and Huberman's data analysis technique reduces interview data. The study results described that learning at the higher education level has differences in the achievement of the graduate profile. There are two main patterns, namely, institution-centered learning and student-centered learning. The student's need for network strengthening requires the systemic transformation of learning. One learning transformation that can be carried out is strengthening learning practices outside the classroom with partners (stakeholders). The primary purpose of partner involvement is a condition designed so that students can increase network capital. This linking capital is expected to be an opportunity for students to increase student succession when they graduate from higher education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Judging from the urgency of education for people's lives, the existence of academic education is a secondary need [1]. However, the significance of education for society cannot be denied. Education is directed at the ideal level and continues to develop according to the needs of the times [2], [3]. This is intended to produce quality human beings who have competitive competencies and must have noble character and good morals. The four pillars of education refer to the conception conveyed by UNESCO wherein, the development of formal education without exception for higher education, namely: i) Learning to know; ii) Learning to do; iii) Learning to be; and iv) Learning to live together [4]–[6].

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious-spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character [7], [8], as well as the skills needed by himself, society, nation, and state. The demands of present and future education lead to an increase in the quality of intellectual and professional abilities and the Indonesian people's attitudes, personalities, and morals. Thus, it can position the Indonesian people with dignity in the world community in the current era of free-market competition [9], [10].

Based on data reported by the central statistics agency (*Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS*), in 2020, the growth of the human development index (HDI) at the regional, national level faced challenges with slowing growth due to the COVID-19 pandemic hit Indonesia and most countries in the world. The slowdown in HDI growth is generally caused by slowing growth in life expectancy and education and a decline in actual per capita spending as a result of the contraction of economic growth [11]. It is undeniable that the HDI if not a pandemic condition, HDI growth tends to lead to a positive trend. However, it should be noted that the challenges that require HDI quality for the world of work are the focus of educational institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to transform learning to consistently improve the quality of HDI.

The data presented by BPS has relevance to the research entitled "Transformative learning in higher education" in 2016. This research suggests that transformative learning is learning that implies a change in the identity of the learner. Reorient the focus of learning to the subject [12], [13]. Transformative learning is needed not only as a form of commitment to learning innovation, but also as a form of adaptation to situational changes that are factual. Thus, at the higher education level, students must practice this learning in contexts relevant to certain situations. The example in question is a link and match between the competencies possessed by students and the competencies needed by the world of work [14], [15]. Therefore, competencies following the previous world of work must be constructed in the curriculum in higher education. To bridge the problem of link and match competence, higher education should create relationships outside higher education institutions [13], [16].

The existence of stakeholders in learning at the higher education level should not only be procedural [17]. One of the policies realized by universities throughout Indonesia is Independent Campus, Freedom to Learn (*Kampus Merdeka, Merdeka Belajar*). This policy opens a learning space that is responsive to the needs of the world of work. This is because the role of the academic world and stakeholders can improve higher education outcomes. Thus, higher education institutions are back in a driving position for change in a country [18], [19]. A considerable role has been given to the academic world in the planning and implementation of our national development, which is almost a quarter of a century. This article aims to analyze learning at the higher education level, which is integrated with the presence of stakeholders as a learning transformation practice. The hope to be achieved is the realization of student network capital. Building network capital is realized from socialization between individuals or organizations. This affects both professional and personal success because the network can expand connections, relationships, and synergies in the future.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Judging from the urgency of the research, a qualitative approach was chosen to describe the analysis of learning at the higher education level by placing the network capital needs for students. Preparation of the completeness of observation sheets and interview guidelines was carried out so that the research direction became clear [20]. More specifically, this research employed a descriptive method with three stages of data collection [21]. Participatory observation in learning from March to May 2021. In meeting the needs of research data, in-depth and structured interviews with 17 students were complemented by the collection of documentation [22]. The researcher applied Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model during the study. The most dominant data reduction was carried out on the results of interviews. Researchers carefully transcribed interviews to select the information that followed the research objectives [23], [24]. However, based on the results of descriptive data presentation and data inference, it was found that learning-oriented to the challenges of the 21st century must be considered [25]. The learning transformation intended by the research subject is a shift in learning orientation. The validity of this data is presented systemically with triangulation techniques [26], [27].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Higher education has a different focus from secondary education, namely implementing education, research, and community service (*Tri Dharma*) [28]. This article focuses on the results and discussion of education, where learning is an indicator of the quality of higher education in higher education. This is because the quality of education in higher education is seen from student learning outcomes and the quality of learning outcomes that are influenced by the quality of learning [29]. The existence of lecturers is a determining factor in determining the high and low quality of learning. The quality of learning is reflected in how the lecturers use the material presentation system, the role of the lecturer in managing learning activities, the level of participation, and the learning climate.

Learning situation which is centered on the institution classically uses the teaching materials that have been outlined in the syllabus. This material is strictly limited to personal interpretation. Based on the results of interviews (R1 and R3) on March 23, 2021, "learning is generally still expository in nature, where virtual face-to-face during online learning emphasizes the lecture method." It is undeniable and students tend

to be passive. As for the little provocation of questions and exposure to brainstorming, it has not functioned optimally. The pattern of institution-centered learning is illustrated as Figure 1.

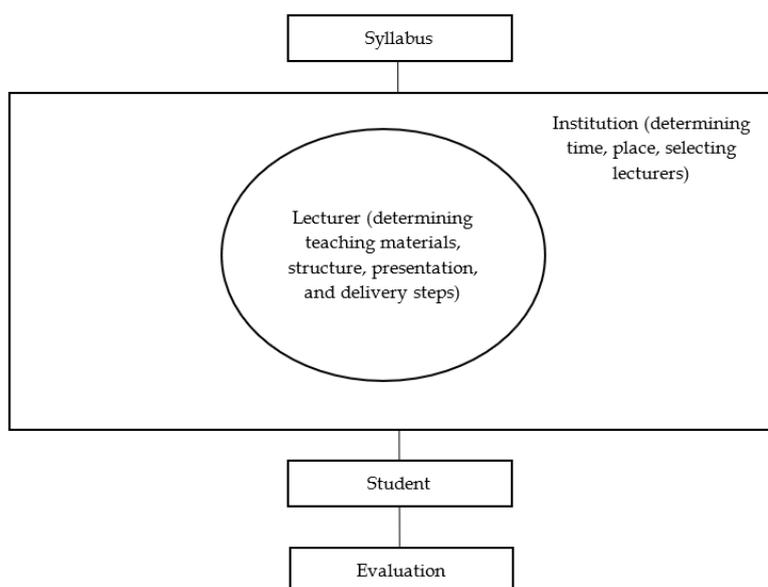


Figure 1. Institution-centered learning structure [30]

Based on Figure 1, it appears that lecturers' role is vital in institutional-centered learning. However, such a pattern leaves weaknesses, such as; i) The success of learning depends on the ability of the lecturer to teach; ii) The syllabus is described in a disguised and not explicit manner so that the lecturers tend to interpret differently; iii) Learning emphasizes how to provide as many teaching materials as possible to students in the available time (setting of teaching materials, the steps in learning depend on experience and consultation with senior lecturers; iv) Students are not given many opportunities for independent learning, freedom, and responsibility, actively participate in decision making [30]–[32].

The achievement of goals in higher education is actually in line with the times. The dynamics of education demand change to adapt and adjust to the development of science and technology. The ultimate goal of the educational process in the global era is to prepare human resources who have international competitiveness [33]. The 21st century education demands the development of quality human resources that can compete in the global era with real human work [34]. The implementation of 21st-century education is functionally to produce productive, creative, innovative, and practical graduates and form competitive advantages for students so that they can compete in the era of globalization. The 21st century educational skills are Critical Thinking, Creativity and Innovation, Communication, and Collaboration (4C) [35], [36].

The urgency of mastering 21st century skills shifts the paradigm of higher education learning from being centered on institutions to meeting the network needs for students. However, this is not an impossibility that cannot be achieved but using a learning transformation approach. Learning transformation was introduced by Mezirow [13], [37]. The need for learning transformation is directed to change the way of thinking or mindset of students. Thus, learning outcomes related to cognitive development are related to changes in students' perspectives (learning that implies changes in learner identity) [12], [38].

Based on the results of interviews with R7, R8, and R11, the need for learning for students is experience. Because through experience, they can put into practice the knowledge that has only been presented theoretically. Again, this becomes one reinforcement that learning is essentially a system that emphasizes the systemic relationship between various components (lecturers, students, learning resources, and the learning environment). Systemic relationship means that all components are integrated with learning following their functions related to each other and form a single unit.

Within the framework of learning transformation at the higher education level, this touches on three dimensions, namely, cognitive, emotional, and social [39]. The relationship of transformative learning to general learning theory is tied to the comprehensive literature on the concept of identity in modern psychology and sociology [14], [40]. Transformative learning concerning several especially psychologically

relevant areas such as different life ages, motivation, defense, competency development, various learning environments, and concepts such as progressive, regressive, recovery, and collective transformation [5].

Transformative learning is just one type or type of learning, among others. Theoretically, four main types of learning are distinguished: cumulative, assimilation, accommodative, and transformative learning [38], [39]. These four types of learning progress in increasingly complex ways, but it is a misunderstanding to believe that more complex types of learning are better than less complex ones. Good learning in this context occurs when the learner practices the type of learning that is relevant to it in a given situation. However, we cannot consciously choose which type of learning to practice; these are decided unconsciously in our brain based on previous learning and motivational states.

Transformative learning practices in higher education can be optimized by involving stakeholders. Stakeholders are parties with interest in the company who can influence or can be influenced by the company's activities [41]. Stakeholders include; community, employees, government. Stakeholder involvement in learning is integrated into five main activities: design, development, implementation, management, and evaluation. Stakeholder involvement in learning is illustrated in Figure 2.

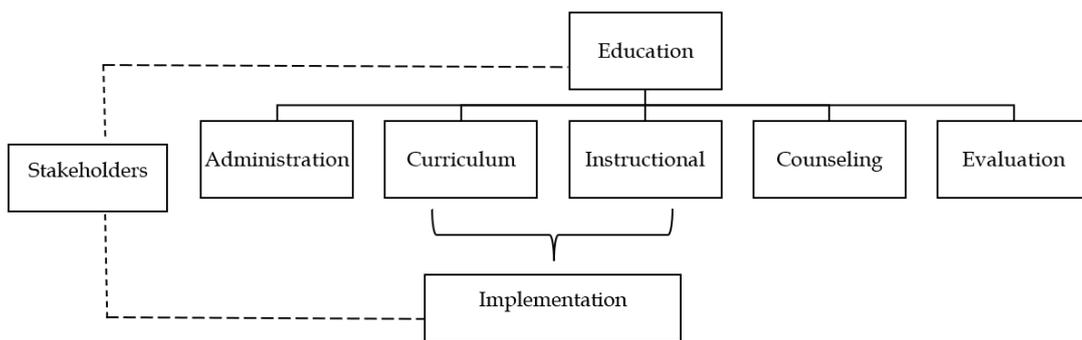


Figure 2. Learning activities at higher education levels according to reigeluth (modified) [42]

Learning reorientation with stakeholder involvement in higher education, especially for increasing student network capital, is projected to increase productivity, expand post-education job opportunities. Higher education capabilities develop as a balanced distribution in the field of knowledge with work needs. Inductively, higher education in higher education is said to be of quality if the higher education institution is oriented to meeting the needs of stakeholders, namely being able to societal needs, industrial needs, and professional needs through the Tri Dharma of Higher Education [14], [43]. Figure 3 shows the documentation of stakeholder involvement in higher education to increase student network capital.



Figure 3. Stakeholder involvement in higher education for increasing student network capital

Figure 3 shows the effort to transform learning that can be done in higher education. The existence of stakeholders not only functions as experts in learning but also opens networks for students. Thus, universities function not only to improve the quality of human resources (HR) who master science and technology but also to develop all science, technology, social sciences, and humanities through research and development. Therefore, the participation of stakeholders, students, and lecturers in the context of active learning becomes very important. Stakeholder involvement supports learning with lecturers as facilitators to

help make it easier for students to learn and build meaningful experiences [28], [44]. Students are also involved in learning, taught, and trained to explore, search, question something, investigate the answer to a question, manage and convey the results communicatively. Students are guided to determine their needs, analyze the information received, select the necessary parts, and give meaning to new information. Students are also expected to be able to modify the knowledge they have received. In addition, students fostered to have the skills to apply and utilize the knowledge they have received in the challenges of life in the future [45], [46]. Select the critical parts and give meaning to new information. Students are also expected to be able to modify the knowledge they have received. Increasing network capital for students by promoting learning transformation with stakeholder involvement requires synergy from various parties. Systemic steps and long steps to change the academic intellectual circle. Thus, it is imperative to pay attention to how the attitude of universities changes the orientation of learning in higher education.

The essential purpose of education is to improve the quality of human life, describing knowledge that is practically useful for society and not only for particular groups [32], [47]. It must be understood that educational practice is a process. The independent learning-campus independent policy program, especially in internships in the industrial world, provides hands-on experience. So that student is expected to be able to adapt to collaborative and competitive work situations. The boundaries of the value of education have shifted from education as the value of knowledge and intellectual skills to the development of individual abilities, which have implications for strategic changes in higher education institutions, namely the development of skills, abilities, and quality of work. Focuses on the limited value of education as knowledge and intellectual skill is rapidly becoming a thing of the past [48]. The new focus is on developing the individual's capability [18]. Thus, these recent changes the context of improving skills, lifelong learning, and transitioning from welfare to work. These changes all relate to improving capability and quality learning, and the authors debate the issues within the setting of institutional strategies work-based learning, skills, development, and assessment.

4. CONCLUSION

Good learning in this context occurs when the learner practices the type of learning that is relevant to it in a given situation. However, we cannot consciously choose which type of learning to practice; these are decided unconsciously in our brain based on previous learning and motivational states. Transformative learning practices in higher education can be optimized by involving stakeholders. Learning reorientation with stakeholder involvement in higher education, especially for increasing student network capital, is projected to increase productivity, expand post-education job opportunities. Stakeholder involvement supports learning with lecturers as facilitators to help facilitate student learning and build meaningful experiences. Increasing network capital for students by promoting learning transformation with stakeholder involvement requires synergy from various parties. Systemic steps and long steps to change the academic intellectual circle. Thus, it is imperative to pay attention to how the attitude of universities changes the orientation of learning in higher education. The essential purpose of education is to improve the quality of human life, describing knowledge that is practically useful for society. Thus, it is essential to pay attention to how the attitude of universities changes the orientation of learning in higher education. Universities through study programs can harmonize the needs of the world of work with fieldwork practices (or internship programs). So that student experienced on how to collaborate and optimize the competencies needed in the world of work.

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