The Development of Communication Science Expertise Through Empowerment of Mindset, Mental Attitudes, Mentorship, and Communities

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***Abstract*. This study referred to the findings regarding the empowerment of mindset, values and mental attitudes, mentorship, and expertise communities to develop expertise in Communication Science. More specifically, the study aimed to explore the capacity development of Communication Science students through the empowerment of mindset, values and mental attitudes, mentorship, and expertise communities. A qualitative approach was utilized to investigate the phenomenon. The data source consisted of the Communication Science students of Social and Political Sciences Faculty at the University of Veteran Bangun Nusantara Sukoharjo. The data included the description of mindset, values and mental attitudes, mentorship, and expertise communities. The analysis proved: (1) a relatively low rate of capacity development process among the Communication Science students through creative mindset empowerment in double/multiple disciplines; (2) a relatively low rate of values and mental attitude perception among the students in supporting the Communication Science capacity development; (3) the urgent requirement to involve relevant experts and experienced mentors to provide guides for the students; and (4) a relatively low rate of the students' involvement in relevant expertise communities related to Communication Science.**

Keywords: mindset, mental attitude, mentor, community

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a science that embraces not only the real of concepts but also the level of expertise and skills. People who learn Communication Science are expected to become skillful communicators in conveying verbal and non-verbal messages eloquently. Communication Science is broken down into a number of courses that prioritize the advancement of expertise and skills, such as graphic design courses, journalism, public relations, photography, videography, and broadcasting.

Communication Science, as part of lecture activities in formal institutions, such as tertiary education institutions, faces a number of obstacles in its exploration, including knowledge-oriented learning process. According to Grant, education system emphasizes on knowledge acquisition and analysis, thus less contributes to the advancement of students' skills and expertise [1].

Meanwhile, according to Bloom, learning objectives are classified into three elements, including (1) cognitive elements that orient to the advance of thinking skills; (2) effective elements that refer to the ability in managing emotion, values, and attitudes; and (3) psychomotor elements that orient to motoric functions [2].

Learning activities within the scope of education tend to be perceived as empowerment. Hiryanto stated that empowerment was considered identical with education as the essence of education itself since both formal and non-formal education would be targeted to empower people, enable people, and develop their talents [3]. Empowerment focuses on the development of human capacity.

According to Mardikanto, capacity building is a process in improving the abilities of individuals, groups, and networks to grow their capacities to carry out certain roles [4]. Regarding the matter, capacity should not be conceived as a passive notion, as its acquisition takes place through a certain active, dynamic, and ongoing process. Meanwhile, the discussion about capacity development always relates to the improvement of capability and existence [5].

Human resource capacity development consists of the development of knowledge, expertise, skills, and mindset that leads to the progress of mental attitudes and individual behavior [6]. According to Mardikanto, the dimension of development consists of (1) the development of personality that affects values, attitudes, and behavior in daily life; and (2)

the development of professional capacity, which includes technical abilities, entrepreneurial attitudes, and managerial skills [7]. It is established not only through formal education but also through non-formal education, guides, and involvement in relevant expertise communities.

However, our education is still stuck at the same gap, in which most students still evolve with their static mindset, grow in negative mental attitudes, and rely on the formal education as the single means to acquire their skills. In fact, the development of mindset and mental attitudes requires their active collaboration with lecturers and mentors in non-formal education and expertise communities.

Regarding the discussion, this study aimed to highlight the capacity development process of the Communication Science Department students through the empowerment of mindset, values, and mental attitudes, formal and non-formal education collaboration (expertise communities), and the involvement of relevant mentors.

METHOD

This study applied a qualitative descriptive approach that led to a detailed and in-depth description of a certain factual phenomenon. It explored information based on particular determinations, as explained by Sutopo [8]. A single case study was focused on expertise development in communication through the empowerment of mindset, values, and mental attitudes, mentorship, and communities.

The data were collected through purposive sampling. The study involved the students of the Communication Science Department from the Social and Political Sciences Faculty at the University of Veteran Bangun Nusantara. The data consisted of the description of mindset, values and mental attitudes, mentorship, and expertise communities.

Meanwhile, the data collection technique applied participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires [9]. The data analysis technique adopted a contextual analysis model regarding mindset, values and mental attitudes, mentorship, and community development. The analysis inductively ranged from data observation, classification, data presentation in tables, narrative analysis, simultaneous interpretation based on patterns, theories, supporting data, and contexts; the conclusion regarding values and mental attitudes, mentorship, and community development [10]. The study implemented triangulation methods to ensure its validity, which included source, methodological, and object triangulation [11].

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Mindset

Based on the responses from 46 Communication Science students regarding their mindset,20 students tended to develop their expertise in photography (20%), 17 students (27%) in journalism, 10 students (16%) in broadcasting, seven students (11%) in videography, six students (9%) in graphic design, and three students(5%) in public relations. Therefore, the majority of the students were into the mindset of developing their skills in photography, followed by journalism and broadcasting.

Additionally, a number of students were willing to develop a creative mindset in double disciplines. The distribution consisted of five students with interest in both photography and broadcasting, four students in photography and videography, two students in public relations and broadcasting, one student in journalism and videography, one student in journalism and photography, as well as one student in videography and broadcasting.

Their desire to develop skills in two disciplines was considered to meet with the human resource demands in the current digital era. Online media nowadays does require human resources with multiple expertises, such as the abilities in photography, writing, videography, and broadcasting. Regarding the matter, mindset empowerment is urgently required. Therefore, Dweck mentioned that individuals that were willing to achieve success should confidently strive to reach their goals and create progress through mindset development [12]. Individuals with a growth mindset tend to be passionate about challenges, adjust themselves with the particular demands of the era, and confidently believe that they will successfully address the challenges. According to Sassenberg, mindset development could be boosted through the development of different thinking patterns in creative ways [13]. This strategy will potentially encourage problem-solving skills and create new ideas.

Values and Mental Attitudes

Based on the students' responses, they tended to have a low level of confidence, concern, and honesty. Briefly, they possessed a poor understanding of values and mental attitudes. To achieve an expertise competency, a student must cultivate positive mental attitudes, such as high self-confidence, honesty, and social caring. Values in life are universal, in which the embodiment exists through the attitudes in dealing with commitment, confidence, cooperation, caring, creativity, challenges, calculation, communication, competitiveness, and situational changes. These attitudes must manifest in learners' souls to achieve their expertise competencies. The understanding of

these values should be developed through daily life behavior in order to let it touch the learners' academic potentials [14].

According to Muhasim, honesty reflects a high moral value to establish a strong mental attitude in improving learners' competencies [15]. Thus, they will be able to adjust themselves with the global development in various sectors. Honesty covers not only attitude but also dignity, self-esteem, self-identity, and nation's recognition.

In any kind of community, the emphasis on values and mental attitudes is essential. As Suryono revealed through their research regarding the empowerment for young entrepreneurs at Sragen Business School, the values of life were considered important [16]. Entrepreneurial students should possess honesty, enthusiasm, kindness, confidence, and Islamic moral values in performing their business activities. In every business matter, they should involve God since business is perceived as part of worship and virtue.

Mentorship

Based on the students' responses, as many as 18 students only had one mentor, three students with two mentors, and two students with three mentors. However, most of the mentors were not experts in communication. The mentors commonly were the students' relatives, such as colleagues, family members, and vocational teachers. With regard to the condition, it is necessary to add the number of mentors with relevant qualifications and intensify the mentoring activities.

Mentoring is a relationship between two people who benefit each other, ranging from people who have more experiences to those with lack of experiences to conduct discussions and reflections in task and learning activities based on support, constructive criticism, mutual openness, mutual trust, and mutual respect in achieving their common goals [17], [18]. It is a continuous and dynamic feedback between two individuals in establishing their relationships through the means of knowledge, skills, and information by emphasizing professional and personal development [19].

Communities

Based on the students' responses, they tended to show less participation in communities relevant to Communication Science. There were 12 students joining one community and three students joining two communities. However, most of the communities, such as campus scout, Handayani Art Community, Kompak Studio, outer-region student communities, PDIP Party (*PartaiDemokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*) were not relevant to the requirement of skill development in Communication Science. Only a few students who join relevant communities, consisting of four students joining*Univet Pos* campus magazine

organization, two students joining the graphic design community, and one student joining the Surakarta Photography Community (KPFS – *KomunitasFotografi Surakarta*). Unfortunately, most of the students had yet to realize the importance of communities in facilitating their capacity improvement. The urgency of involvement in a particular community was proved by Suryono, stating that networking interaction would encourage communication [20]. For instance, the WhatsApp communication group as social media could be utilized as an empowerment media to inspire its participants in broadening their understanding of certain sciences. However, the utilization of the WhatsApp communication group facility had yet to cover the discussion of particular scientific skills, causing less optimum function in improving the participants' expertise capacity.

In an attempt to increase the human resource capacity, a network is considered urgent as part of initial social capital. According to Bartkus, social capital is the tangible form of a good relationship established through communication, cultural norm interaction, knowledge and expertise sharing, as well as problem-solving skills within small or large groups [21]. The interaction will stimulate individuals' motivation in creating progress. Therefore, a colleague network is a good instance of the concept of social capital.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded the following matters:(1) a relatively low rate of capacity development process among the Communication Science students through creative mindset empowerment in double/multiple disciplines; (2) a relatively low rate of values and mental attitude perception among the students in supporting the Communication Science capacity development; (3) the urgent requirement to involve relevant experts and experienced mentors to provide guides for the students; and (4) a relatively low rate of the students' involvement in relevant expertise communities related to Communication Science.

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