

Life Skills and Experiential Learning on Work-Based Learning (Case of Travel Business Students)

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the learning experience gained by students of the Travel Business while doing internships in the Travel Bureau industry. The research method used is quantitative descriptive. This study resulted in three important findings: Students at WBL were not given enough trust to make reservations, booking, and printing, the experience of doing ticketing and printing cannot be given by all industries because not all Travel Agencies act as agents, and dominant students during WBL are given the trust to use office work facilities and communicate with customers. Finally, not all activities in the industry could be given by Travel industry to the students because they worried with student competencies and part of their business have secret.

Keywords: Work-based learning, life skills, experiential learning, travel business management

INTRODUCTION

Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (2018), Indonesia's position in 2017 is ranked 42 out of 136 countries. This position is ranked 4th for the ASEAN level which is still below Singapore at number 13, Malaysia 26, and Thailand at number 34. However, if measured from the indicators of human resource and labor market, Indonesia ranks 6th out of 9 South-east Asian countries in under Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Conditions indicate that the quality of Indonesia's human resources in tourism is still low.

Nowadays, the greatest challenge is globalization that stems from the industrial revolution 4.0 which leads to all mankind around the world to the vortex of global life dynamics. Globalization challenges turn out to have a reverse effect on the development of educational scholarship. Delors (2000) identifies seven characteristics as the embodiment of a new paradigm shift in education in the 21st century, namely; (1) from learning terminal to image lifelong learning; (2) from learning to focus on mastery of knowledge to holistic learning; (3) from confrontational images of teacher-student relationship to image of partnership; (4) from scholars emphasizing scholastic knowledge; (5) from his campaign against illiterate (blind) to campaign against technology, culture and computer blind; (6) from the appearance of an isolated teacher to the work team's appearance; (7) from the exclusive concentration on the competition to the orientation of cooperation.

The Strategy of the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia for the 6 state tertiary tourism institutions under its management is to develop curriculum, certify and create a center of excellence in each tertiary institution. However, the classic problem and always the biggest challenge in education is overcoming the gap between educational institutions and industry. Much research has been done to reduce the gap between the quality of graduates with the competencies needed by industry. One of them is through work-based learning (WBL).

WBL research and evaluation show a correlation between graduates' outputs and impacts with the learning structure provided by schools and industry as work experience. When program objectives, curriculum and workplace-based experience are designed and applied with adequate staff support and properly evaluated, the program will have a positive impact (Lynch & Harnish, 1998; Fallow & Weller, 2000; Braham & Pickering, 2007; Garnett & Young, 2008)

The implementation of the WBL in the study program of Tourism Travel Business Management in Makassar Tourism Polytechnic is carried out in the form of Real Work Practices. This program is held for 6 months in the industry of Travel Agencies, airlines, and cargo. While in the industry, students are expected to gain work experience that matches their competencies. After graduate, students' competence in Travel Industry. But in fact, some students said that they did not get much experience while doing work-based learning. This research will analyze the work experience of students in the WBL program which is carried out in the study program of business travel management based on the competence of reservation, booking, ticketing, printing, using facilities and facing the customers.

Experiential Learning on Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning as an approach to learning that results from the involvement of students in activities in the workplace with employers and is designed to improve students' knowledge and skills. Work experience is complemented by instructions and activities that apply, strengthen, improve, or expand learning that occurs during work, so students develop attitudes, knowledge, skills, and habits that may not develop from their own work experience (Vermont Agency of Education, 2014).

Learning experiences with WBL are activities that involve actual work experience or that link work and career learning classes. Through the WBL, education programs have become more relevant, rigorous, challenging, and beneficial for students, parents, educators, and businesses. This opportunity is very helpful for students to make connections between academic principles and real-world applications. For many people, being able to answer the question 'Why do I need to know this?' And provide motivation to learn more.

The WBL learning process in the form of learning experiences helps students to help connect with internal and external contexts, namely the knowledge they have, prior knowledge, the learning situation that takes place and external activities such as school or industry. This experience will produce a deep understanding and develop competencies that can be applied in various situations in the future (Bern & Erikson, 2001). Real experiences are the basis of the process of observation and reflection. Reflections are integrated and filtered in abstract concepts into new implications of action that can be taken. The implications can be actively tested and used as a guide to creating new experiences, there will be an accommodation, creative, intellectual and practice process (Kolb, 1984).

Life Skills

Life skills are defined as a skill learned to do something well. Life skills are the habits of every individual by learning something that can help improve the quality of life. Life skills can be interpreted as 'skills that help an individual be successful in living a productive and satisfying life' (Francis, 2007). Life skills are a factor students must have in facing increasingly complex work fragmentation. By having life skills students will be able to face various demands and challenges in life more effectively. The WBL program is considered capable of delivering students to gain life skills. Factor's characteristic of students, industrial climate, the role of industry and the quality of WBL learning affect student life skills (Aini, 2017).

Reorientation of Human Resources in the Industrial Revolution Era 4.0

Facing the industrial revolution 4.0, there are at least three things that need to be considered by all parties. First, is quality, which is an effort to produce quality human resources to fit the needs of the job market based on digital technology. Secondly, it is a matter of quantity, which is to produce number of qualified, competent human resources according to industry needs. Third, is the problem of the distribution of quality human resources that is still uneven. Efforts to increase competency and productivity of human resources need to be done massively through job training institutions,

professional certification bodies that are being carried out by the government through training in vocational training centers and apprenticeship programs.

Answering the challenges of the industrial revolution era 4.0 is not enough just with old human literacy, which only bases on the ability to read, write, and count. According to Aoun (2017), to get competitive human resources in industry 4.0, the education curriculum must be designed so that output can be able to master new literacy, namely: (1) Data literacy, namely the ability to read, analyze and utilize big data information in the digital world ; (2) technological literacy, which is understanding the workings of machines, application of technology (coding, artificial intelligence and engineering principles, and (3) human literacy, humanities, communication and design

METHODS

This research-based on a quantitative descriptive approach with a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. The sample was 44 Diploma students of business travel program in Makassar Tourism Polytechnic who have implemented practical work programs in the industry. There were 5 aspects that become indicators of this study, namely: (1) The experience of making reservations; (2) The experience of booking and printing; (3) The experience of ticketing or printing; (4) The experience of using facilities/ equipment reservations; and (5) The communication experience with guests/ customers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Experience of Making a Reservation

One of the competencies in a travel business is being able to make both manual and computerized bookings. Every service request that comes from the customer must go through the ordering process, for that, a reservation staff will collect various ordering information needed by the customer. This process of serving customer orders must be experienced by students who are following the WBL program.

Table 1. The Experience of Making a Reservation.

| Types of Reservation | Yes | No |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. Hotel | 23 | 21 |
| 2. Restaurant | 17 | 27 |
| 3. Transportation | 24 | 20 |
| 4. Tours: City, Marine, Eco, etc. | 24 | 20 |
| 5. Tailor made package | 16 | 28 |

Table 2. The Experience of booking and printing

| Type of Reservation | Yes | No |
|---|--------|--------|
| 1. Hotel | 26 | 18 |
| 2. Restaurant | 18 | 26 |
| 3. Transportation | 24 | 20 |
| 4. Tours: City, Marine, Eco, etc. | 23 | 21 |
| 5. Tailor made package | 11 | 33 |
| 6. Readymade package | 23 | 21 |
| 7. Transfer in/out from airport | 17 | 27 |
| 8. Domestic and international reservation and voucher | 14 | 30 |
| Average | 44,32% | 55,68% |

Based on the data Table 1, it can be seen not all students had experienced making reservations during the WBL. Only 46.88 percent of the students had the experience to make a reservation. More than half of them did not get it.

The Experience of Booking and Printing

Another competency was gaining experience in booking and printing (seen in Table 2). This experience must be felt by students so that they feel the process of doing the actual booking and printing. The experience of booking and printing was only experienced by 44.32 percent and the remaining 55.68 percent did not get this experience.

The Experience of Ticketing or Printing

One of the business scopes of the Travel Bureau is to offer flight tickets both domestically and internationally. However, not all Travel Bureau companies act as agents, but many do as sub-agents. For this experience, not all Travel Agencies can give it. Only those who act as agents can do ticketing or printing. Based on the survey in Table 3, only 35.23 percent of students could gain experience doing ticketing or printing. This was acceptable because of the most travel agent as a sub-agent.

Table 3. The Experience of Ticketing or Printing

| Type of Airlines | Yes | No |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| 1. Domestic Airlines | 21 | 23 |
| 2. International Airlines | 10 | 34 |
| Average | 35.23% | 64.77% |

The Experience of Using Facilities/ Equipment Reservation

The experience of using various kinds of facilities and reservation equipment will help students gain the right experience at work. Office facilities available are used to support work. For this reason, students need experience that can make them confident in their work. The survey results in Table 4 showed that students were given the confidence to use various work facilities and equipment reservations during WBL.

Table 4. The Experience of Using Facilities/Equipment Reservation

| Type of Equipment | Yes | No |
|---|--------|--------|
| 1. Online system (Abacus, Galileo) etc. | 28 | 16 |
| 2. Computer | 42 | 2 |
| 3. Printer | 42 | 2 |
| 4. Copy Machine | 41 | 3 |
| 5. Fax Machine | 18 | 26 |
| 6. Telephone and Handy Talkie | 38 | 6 |
| Average | 79.17% | 20.83% |

The Communication Experience with Guest/ Customers

Table 5. The Communication Experience with Guest/ Customers

| Type of Communication | Yes | No |
|---|--------|--------|
| 1. Greetings | 39 | 5 |
| 2. Conversation | 32 | 12 |
| 3. Dealing with customer requirements, queries, and complaints | 27 | 17 |
| 4. Tours: City, Marine, Eco, etc. | 30 | 14 |
| 5. Customer orientation approach | 28 | 16 |
| 6. Correspondence, Telephone, Email, Website, social media, and Fax | 28 | 16 |
| 7. English | 32 | 12 |
| 8. Other languages | 8 | 36 |
| Average | 63.63% | 36.37% |

One of the most important competencies in communicating with guests/customers. Communication with customers helps build student confidence in work. Communication can be done in a variety of situations. Starting from simple communication in the form of greeting to difficult

communication such as facing customer complaints. All these situations are expected to be felt by students during the WBL. Survey results in Table 5 showed that 63.63% of students have experience communicating with customers in various situations. The most common communication is 'greeting'.

Based on the data above showed that not all activities in the industry could give to the students. Some of Travel industry distrusted with the students' competency. They worried if students did the wrong things. Some travel industries though that part of their business was a secret. This condition shown that Kolb's theory, namely: (1) Experience the activity-perform or do it; (2) Share the experience by describing what happened; (3) Process the experience to determine what was most important and identify common themes; (4) Generalize from the experience and relate it to their daily lives; (5) Apply what they learned to a new situation, were difficult implemented. Education to build character in the era of 4.0 as a vehicle to humanize young people basically an activity to prepare life, whether individual, community, and a nation to a better life. The cultivation of values among young people today is considered important given the challengers they face the future is very heavy, especially about the shift of values that are, will and have happened, both in the family and in society.

CONCLUSION

The results showed several important findings, namely: (1) Students at WBL were not given enough trust to make reservations, booking and printing; (2) The experience of doing ticketing and printing cannot be given by all industries because not all Travel Agencies act as agents; and (3) Most students were given the trust to use facilities and doing communication with customers. The results of this study can be continued by conducting research on the scope of industrial operations (Travel Bureau) which is thought to influence work experience gained during the WBL. Unlike hotels, the Travel Bureau industry does not have the same standard. So, to complete the results of this study need further research.

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