

FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE OF COURSE CENTER MANAGEMENT IN URBAN AREAS

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Abstract

Observing the role of course center to provide public access to informal learning is rare in many literature body. In addition, there is lack of information about strategies implemented by course center to improve their performance in managing the course center management. The paper analyzes the factors influencing the performance of course center in Jakarta region to fulfill the learner needs. A novelty is proposed in this paper as a model to understand how the course center can improve their performance to provide informal learning and the performance of center management. The paper uses a quantitative type with purposive sampling questionnaire which distributed to the tutor, course center manager, course owners and office staffs. Our analysis result showed that the course center needs integrating their strategies to maximize their function in the community. This research is useful to provide input to the government and course managers so that the course center in Jakarta can improve their performance to fulfill the learner needs.

Keywords: course manager, competence, performance

Introduction

Courses as informal learning activities are organized by learning center to provide education to community (Green, 2017). The course center has legal form of small institution and sometimes it is informal center (Zoogah, et al., 2015). The course centers are characterized by various lessons covering English translation class, job planning and interview class, journal writing club, robotic and microcontroller lessons (Dunn, 2015).

The course center also has many nickname such as “Bimbel” shortened from terminology of “bimbingan belajar” or informal learning center similar to club or “paguyuban” (Aisyah, S., & Ag, 2015). For the simplification, this research used the terminology “informal education center” rather than club (Ratana-Ubol & Henschke, 2015).

In common community, course center has main position in community since its characteristics of flexible time of the learning activities (Simonson, et al.,

2014). The course also can expand public access to get informal and customized education to get learning and education. However, there is lack of research observing the role of course center to provide public access to informal learning. In addition, there is rare examination about strategies implemented by course center to improve their performance in managing the course center management (Ginter, et al., 2018). As informal center, course center sometimes organized as self-sufficient body and work based of the community demand (Mayombe & Lombard, 2016). Previous studies showed that many course centers are lacking of knowledge and experience to plan the curriculum targets and quality learning services. In addition, the course centers lack of resource to compete and maximize their function in the community (Anis, et al., 2018). From actor side, the course center also faced with the diverse competence and experience of their tutor, course center manager, course owners and office staffs. These combined factors have led to long term issues and problematic course center management (Weijo, et al., 2018).

Previous research has tried to resolve the issues by proposing models of performance mapping of course management. However, the models only resolve partially the issues faced by course center to improve their performance, strategies and capabilities (Romiszowski, 2016). Literature body has lack of information and lack of observation about the role of course manager in running the center. Therefore, the performance measurement has become a novelty and our model wants to expand the literature body by measuring manager role as main actor in the successful course management strategies (Beebe, 2015).

Scholars have stated that course manager has wide role in the routine management of course center such as supervision, strategy and capability (Romiszowski, 2016). However, many studies reported that the course manager lack of knowledge tasks and function which led to lower supervision knowledge and performance of course manager (Kerzner, H., & Kerzner, 2017). The performance can be measure from their ability to handle operational and educational programs (Vo, et al., 2017). There are various study results showed that the manager understands of the purpose of the establishment of the center also lead to the failed supervision and finally their performance. Many course managers only focused on the development issues and tuition fees (Ting, et al., 2017; Buckingham & Goodall, 2015). In addition, many studies informed that the course manager does not provide open access of community participation to involve in the course center activities. There are three causes, firstly, (a) low community participation, (b) lack of cooperation with parents and (c) unenjoyably atmosphere of learning in the course location site.

Even though the benefit of the community participation activity is wide and important, however, many course managers do not know how to build relationship with their community. (Bowman, et al., 2015). The issue becomes more problematic when the course manager must accept diverse learner background (Taufiqurrohman, et al., 2017). Based on this background, we are interested to observe the role of course managers in the process of managing the center performance as research topic.

This paper has five parts. Firstly, it summarizes the research problem formulation, gap and novelty. Secondly, it observed the literature review about the role of course manager in course center activities. In part three, it provides explanation about research methods. Part four consisted two components, (a) it tested the relationship of supervision knowledge, strategy and capability of the course manager toward their performance; and (b) supervision knowledge, strategy and capability of the course manager toward the attitude of course manager in accepting diverse learner background. Part five consisted conclusion and recommendation for course manager to implement and evaluate their management strategies.

Theoretical Review

Professionalism of course manager

Course center daily activities are managed by a course manager (Yulia, 2014). The word profession and professional have been related to the term "Professionalism" which means quality, competence, and productive behavior (Elton, 2018). The term also refers to certain characteristic of achieving certification indicator and goal (Biesta, 2015). The concept was supported by Satori (2008) that professionalism refers to the commitment of members of a profession group or association to improve their member skills and continuously develop the strategies in order their member can perform well the work that suits their profession (Furner, 2017).

Professionalism is also related to community expectations especially in education context and center in providing informal learning activities. There are indicator of professionalism which must be owned by a course tutor covering personal competence, social competence and teaching competence (Munzaki, et al., 2016). According to Sanjaya (2005) the tutor profession must be based on competencies of personal, professional and social aspects.

Personality competence

The National Standard of Education Act of article 28 paragraph (3) point b regulated the definition of personality competence as a steady, stable, mature, wise, and authoritative personality capability and a role model for learners with noble character. This definition is also expanded by Asnani & Nurismilida (2017) as individual with steady, stable, mature, wise and prudent personality skill to handle authoritative and role model for learners and community.

Pedagogic competence

Pedagogic competence refers to an ability of a tutor to handle classroom activity which includes understanding of knowledge bases, learner educational base, curriculum planning, syllabus development, learning design, teaching, learning outcomes evaluation, and actualization of learner's development to various potentials (Afif, et al., 2017). For course manager, pedagogic competence is the ability to manage the learning activities which includes the learner-tutor interaction, learning activities design, and learning application.

Professionalism competence

Professional competence are similar for both course tutor and course manager especially from their authority and ability to carry out the profession task in teaching and managing classroom (Ana, et al., 2016) which covering the following aspects:

1. Mastering educational foundation, eg, measurement of achieving basic competencies and learning outcomes, function of coursework in the community, recognizing educational psychology in learning process.
2. Mastering teaching materials and education curriculum.
3. Developing syllabus and learning program. Both tutor and manager must establish competence achievement plan as target and learning objectives. They also must select adequate teaching materials, developing learning strategies, instructional media, and utilizing various learning resources.
4. Implementing the learning program event. They must create productive learning atmosphere, manage learning space, and manage interaction of teaching and learning interaction.
5. Assessing learning outcomes by using a class-based assessment system (Surya, 2006: 176).

Social Community Competence

Social competencies have many dyadic faces. Basically, the competencies represent the ability of educators as part of public to communicate both orally and written by using communication and information technology. Functionally, it represents the ability of tutor to socialize effectively with learners, education personnel, parents / guardians of the learners and get along well with the surrounding community (Walker & Pattison, 2016).

Role of manager in course management

Management is essentially a process of planning, organizing, implementing, leading and controlling the efforts of members of the organization and utilizes all organizational resources to achieve certain goals set. According to Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2014) management is the process of integrating unrelated sources into total systems to accomplish goals and maintain their resources. The resources in management included people, tools, materials, money, and means. All directed and coordinated to be centralized in order to accomplish goals (Harrison, F., & Lock, 2017).

In course management, the course manager is the individual in charge to establish motivation to the subordinates. The manager also must set the motivation and adequate human resource in order to achieve the goals. However, it does not mean that the course manager is responsible to determine the success path of educational center or organization of the courses (Kerzner & Kerzner, 2017).

Meanwhile, Roman (2017) also stated that the management functions, e.g., Planning, Organizing, Actuating and Controlling.

Planning

Planning can be interpreted as the basic process to arrange plans, select strategies and how to achieve goals. Each plan is generated to give an exact way to achieve organizational goals (Bryson, 2018). Argenti (2018) holds a view that the plan contains several aspects as below.

1. plan is a continuous process
2. plan will involve all leaders of the organization
3. plan must be arranged in storied and hierarchical way
4. plan concerns the organization's activities for the future
5. Plan is the answer to the status quo of the concerned organization.

A plan is suitable to implement if it meets the following criteria:

1. Clear, it must be understandable and can answer the question what, which, why, when, where and how.
2. Pragmatic, it must be based on concrete calculations and logical assumptions
3. Operational, it can be implemented with existing capabilities
4. Ambitious but still realistic
5. Takes place through consistent time staging
6. Flexible in any sense at any time which adapted to situations and conditions. It can change from the original assumption, wherever possible without prejudice to established goals and objectives.
7. Priority scale. A good plan is measured from the ability to implement. It is not based on the will (Hill & Alexander, 2017).

Organizing

Organizing can be understood as the whole management activities in grouping people as well as assignment of tasks, functions, authority and responsibilities. It has goals of creating activities that are efficient and effective in achieving the goals. In this connection, Schaltegger & Burritt, (2017) explained that organizing process has several elements:

1. General objectives to be achieved by the organization and the specific objectives or objectives of each organizational unit.
2. Activities definition or tasks description which required achieving the objectives.
3. Functional activities or tasks in a practical work unit.
4. Duties of individual units, groups and individuals including necessary physical resources.
5. The authority of each organizational unit and system of working relationships to do coordination in task implementation.

To implement the organizing strategy, course manager need to measure (A) the organization as functional unit, (b) work grouping to describe the division of labor; (c) the organization should regulate the delegation of authority and responsibility, (d) the organization must reflect the span of control, (e) the organization must contain unity of command, (f) the organization must be balanced with rational thinking.

Actuating

Actuating has similar term with mobilization or encouragement. The actuating strategy can be understood as an overall effort, method, technique and method to encourage members of the organization to willingly work as possible to achieve organizational goals efficiently, effectively and economically (Gholston, 2015).

Specifically, the actuating also has element such as:

1. Integration of individual and organizational goals
2. Unity of group and organizational goals
3. Cooperation between leaders
4. Participation in decision making
5. Delegation of sufficient authority
6. Establishment of effective communication, and
7. Effective and efficient monitoring (Rana, et al., 2016).

Supervision

The control effort or supervisory function has four activities, e.g., (1) setting performance standards; (2) measuring achievements; (3) comparing achievements with standards, (4) reducing risk and deviations from standard of achievement (Lacy & Williams, 2018). Supervision has main goal to expand the monitoring efforts to be carried out effectively. Supervision must reflect the following conditions;

1. should be planned about, what, who, why, when, where and how
2. must be done seriously without doubting
3. reflect employees needs
4. reported the results to the control
5. should be flexible but firm
6. should follow the pattern of the organization
7. should be done as efficiently as possible, and consider the economic aspect between the outcome and the sacrifice
8. Must be accompanied by improvement.

The course manager is the driving force in motivating subordinates, human resources to achieve the goals. However, it does not mean the course manager can determine everything. The manager and the tutor will determine the success of an educational center especially in the course center.

Method

This research uses quantitative approach in the form of associative rule. It is intended to know the factors that influence the performance of course management in Jakarta area. The Object is studied from 2015 to 2017. It used descriptive statistics method to answer the purpose of the research.

This research collected respondents who work as course manager of local Bimbel in Jakarta area. It used Simple Random Sampling approach. The approach collected the sample representing the population randomly with same probability through online questionnaire where the links is distributed through social media.

The questionnaire is attached to a cover letter to course managers. They are given simple brief letter explaining research purpose and instruction to fill the questionnaire. To answer the first research question, it asked their job description, responsibility and also their demographics. This analysis uses descriptive statistics to explore the respondent’s situation. It does not intend to conclude in general. For the second research objective, this research uses quantitative approach. The approach helps the author to analyze data with cleaning process into numbers and formulas with certain calculations. The cleaned data are analyzed and investigated with software Eviews 7 statistical software package.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Respondent demographics

Respondent	Total People	%
Respondents by gender		
• Men	68	62%
• Women	42	38%
Respondents by job		
• Tutors	44	44%
• course managers	54	54%
Respondents by age		
• 25-30 year old	15	7,15 %
• 30-35 year old	15	7,15 %
• 35-40 year old	49	49 %
• 40-45 year old	21	21 %
Respondents based on education level		
• Higher education (D3, S1,)	87	77 %
• Master degree	12	18.5%
• Doctoral degree	11	4.5%

Source: primary data (2018)

Based on table above, the majority of respondents by gender are men 68 people (62%) and women 42 respondents (38%). Most of them are tutors (44%), whereas the rests are course managers. the questionnaire did not asking about the course owners since it is out of our research scope. For their age, both tutor and manager admitted their ages are between 35-40 years old 49 people (49%). For the educational background most of them obtained higher education (D3 and S1) 87 people (77%), followed by master degree 12 people (18.5%) and doctoral degree 11 people (4.5%).

We examine the relationship of all variable tested in this research. The independent variables are Personality, Pedagogic, Professional, Social, Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Monitoring, Government Policy and Community Participation and the dependent variable is course performance. Our overall model has value of fitness of 251.68 compared with residual 3.12. This means that the proposed model is considered very well. Furthermore, our model obtained R-

squared 0.87 which means that variance rate in the dependent variable (course performance) can be explained by independent variables. All of these variables measure overall strength of the relationship and reflect 87% of all relationship between the independent and the dependent variables.

We also tested partially between personality competence and course performance. The testing result showed a greatest role of personality competence especially its construct, e.g., curriculum quality has significant effect on the course performance with t-value 2.05 (0.043) and significance of 0.05. for pedagogic variable, our testing result showed minus result of t-value -0.51 (0.608), so we conclude there is no relationship between pedagogic competence with course performance. The result is similar to social competence with t-value -0.63 (0.528). The result is different between professional competence and course performance with t-value 1.79 (0.076).

Further, the variable of planning has a small effect on the course performance with t-value 0.17 (0.862). Thus, the organizing efforts among the tutors also have significant result after we tested with course performance with t-value 2.17 (0.032). Finally, supervisor variable and government policy are tested toward course performance which resulted t-value of 4.16 (0.000) and 5.70 (0.000). However, the community participation give small t-value after we tested toward course performance (t-value 0.79 (0.430)). For full details are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Testing result of the proposed model

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
Personality competence and course performance	0.175	0.065	2.05	0.043
supervisor	0.226	0.081	4.16	0.000
the organizing efforts among the tutors	0.006	0.085	2.17	0.032
pedagogic variable	0.013	0.081	-0.51	0.608
social competence	0.322	0.057	-0.63	0.528
professional competence and course performance	0.281	0.071	1.79	0.076
Planning	0.155	0.172	0.17	0.862
government policy	0.152	0.032	5.70	0.000
community participation	0.040	0.070	0.79	0.430
R-squared	0.875	Mean dependent var		3.620
Adjusted R-squared	0.607	S.D. dependent var		1.073
S.E. of regression	0.671	Akaike info criterion		2.076
Sum squared resid	87.130	Schwarz criterion		2.192
Log likelihood	-200.69	Hannan-Quinn criter.		2.123
Durbin-Watson stat	1.787			

Source: statistical result (2018)

Conclusion

In this paper, we have tested our model representing the course management and the performance of both tutors and managers. We conducted the testing process in several steps. Firstly, we examine the planning and evaluation which have been done by the course manager both in long-term and short-term program. Second, the curriculum management which covers the government curriculum and the local curriculum are also tested as the planning variable. It covers the constructs of curriculum planning, syllabus development, learning design, teaching and learning outcomes evaluation, and actualization of learner development

Third, the management of teaching and learning process in this course is guided by annual and semester programs prepared by the tutors. Fourth the course managers are usually become the head of course center and also the tutors. However, we did not observe and asked the course owner. Fifth, the management of facilities and infrastructure is handled directly by the course manager both from procurement, maintenance and repair of course facilities. This research does not measure the provision of course facilities both physical and nonphysical aspects even though it impacted on the atmosphere of learning. The physical environment, such as ornamental trees is important to improve discipline among the course citizens.

Sixth, financial management is handled by course manager. For other external activities such as public relation and corporate social responsibility (CSR), they are not examined in this research. Even though the relationships of course center with the surrounding community are realized with the social work, scholarship, discount price, however, this does not provide significant result to the learner admission. Seventh, the admission service for new learners is not examined and tested in this research since this research does not prioritizing the learning progress or coaching activities.

Course center has wide access to community education. It needs adequate course management to use the facilities and provide public access of educational services. The course center has opportunities to bring benefit to the expansion of public access to education. To get a complete development program, many course centers in Jakarta area has been included the five main targets as their strategic mission of the centers, such as: (1) providing educational facilities and infrastructure, including optimizing the utilization of center space facilities. (2) Developing a quality curriculum and teaching materials including piloting learning models. (3) Enhancing understanding and importance of education to parents, communities and municipal government. (4) Improving the quality of managerial staff and educators, and (5) developing policies, planning, monitoring, evaluating and supervising the implementation of educational development of course learners. They have to develop quality standards and norms that are very beneficial for quality assurance of course center education.

Course center can facilitate the growth and development of all aspects of the learner's personality. Educational courses provide opportunities for the learners to develop their personality. Therefore, special education courses such as Bimbel can provide a variety of activities with flexible time and place that are qualified in

order to develop various aspects of development including the development of cognitive, social, emotional, physical, motoric, and linguistic and arts.

Improving the quality and relevance of the course education can be done through several programs, among others: (1) program development strategy in each regency and district, (2) control system development and quality assurance mechanism; (3) capacity building of the organizational resources; and (4) development and implementation of learning strategies; and (5) professional development of educators and education personnel. Such insightful strategies are given and disclosed in detail as below.

The development of tutor's competence in the teaching and learning process can improve the teaching quality to provide interesting and engrossing learning. Course manager have to work with the government to provide trained tutors and supervisors in accordance with their main duties and functions.

The course center in Jakarta area has been directed into higher standard which influenced by internal and external conditions. There are positive support given by the community and government such as (1) the learners have opportunity to obtain education, (2) government has provide provision to support the quality center, (3) the education management in the course center is implemented with quality and applying principles of democracy, transparent, accountable and retrieval decisions with participatory way; (4), as the course center can fulfill their standard requirement, the center can get more wide support from government funding and stakeholders including active participation and support from parents and the community in implementing their programs.

Improving course management has been conducted by many course centers through both internal and external aspects. From the internal aspects, there is various result due to the course manager always strives to develop their competence, quality, ability, and professionalism. From external side, it needs government supervision, evaluation and monitoring including administrative skill in utilizing facilities.

Course manager is expected to immediately address the problems that hinder the course performance. In addition, course manager must observe and evaluate their tutor competence to improve the course performance so that the course management can provide effective and efficient learning results.

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