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The Evaluation of Post PT3 Program Using Stake's Countenance Model

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the Post PT3 Program in a sub-urban secondary school located in the district of Tuaran, Sabah. The program aims to encourage all the form three students' attendance after they have taken the PT3 examination by occupying them with activities that would enhance their learning ability outside the classroom. This study used Stake's Countenance evaluation model. The data were collected using observation, informal-interview and documentation techniques. The conclusion was: (1) Intended antecedents congruent to the actual antecedents, minor issues in both intended transaction/outcomes and actual transaction/ outcomes. (2) Post PT3 program worth to be sustained with support from the administration and teachers (3) Evaluator's major concerns are lack of teachers' participation and commitment in the implementation of the program.

Keywords: post PT3 program, evalution, secondary school

Introduction

Post PT3 program is a continuance activity fully taken charge by Guidance and Counselling Unit [Unit Bimbingan dan Kaunseling (UBK)] after the end of PT3's exam. The aim is to provide all the form three students with meaningful yet enjoyable activities after they have struggled hard for their PT3's examination. This program is a combination of non-academic activities and some recreational activities which are very useful for students to nurture teamwork spirit, loving the school by beautifying the building and appreciating the cleanliness of the surrounding environment. All the events planned are not based on classroom teaching and learning activities. It rather operates based on physical, emotion, spiritual, intellectual and social and moral development of an individual with combination of indoor and outdoor activities. Besides that, the form three students will get an early exposure to the upper secondary elective subjects and other educational options that are available for them to pursue their study in form four.

This program will also assist, manage and control especially form three students' whereabouts after they have finish sitting the PT3's exam. It is hoped that students will develop their personality in this program by occupying their free time with meaningful and enjoyable activities provided, uncover their hidden scientific and creative talents, and avoiding them from subsiding into unhealthy social activities. To make it more interesting, education across curriculum activities will be compacted to this program without wholly depending on academic.

Problem Statement

By the end of the PT3's examination, the form three students still need to attend school for some period of time until the school term officially end. It is the school greatest concern that students will play truant and missed school while there are still approximately one month to year-end holiday. During this period, teachers should occupy students with appropriate activities that will have positive impact in their overall educational development and to at least maintain their attendance to school. Therefore, this evaluation aims to highlight the strength and improve any weaknesses of the program as well as eliminating those with minimum impact towards students' overall development so that it would be more beneficial for the future participants.

In order to run the Post PT3 program, besides carefully planned activities, the organizer also need some fund to cater the program. Students need to be rewarded for activities completed. The program would cost almost RM1000 yearly and the fund has been decreasing from year to year according to the grant granted for the program which is not so encouraging. This evaluation is important to prove that the program is still beneficial to students so that the grant will be sustain or maybe amount can be added more than the present year. Funding will be needed to sustain the program if it is proved to be beneficial to students.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to identify the outcomes of the program in the particular school. The findings are anticipated to serve as reference to improve, sustain or eliminate some activities included in the program. It is hoped that the generated outcomes using the Stake's countenance model could be used as a reference point in the design, development and implementation of future post PT3 program. Below are the objectives of the program evaluation:

i. To which extent do intended antecedent congruent to the actual antecedents.
ii. To which extent do transactions congruent to the actual transactions.
iii. To which extent do the intended outcomes congruent to the actual outcomes.

Research Questions

Three research questions were constructed to identify the outcomes of this evaluation using Stake's countenance model. The research questions are:

i. Are the intended antecedents congruent to the actual antecedents?
ii. Are the intended transactions congruent to the actual transactions?
iii. Are the intended outcomes congruent to the actual outcomes?

Limitations of the study

Although this evaluation was carefully prepared, evaluator was aware of its limitations and shortcomings. First, this evaluation was limited to one school in a sub-urban area located in the district of Tuaran. The reason for choosing the school was because the accessibility and close ties that the researcher has with the school teachers and administration. Since all sample was taken from only one school, the results gained cannot be used to represent all schools in sub-urban area. Students' background was different and the sizes of samples used too were small. Samples were taken from all the form three students of only one school.

Secondly, the program was fully taken charge by the school Unit Bimbingan dan Kaunseling. All the planned activities were under their authority and other teachers were only assigned to help and cover selected activities. Thirdly, the absence of an official meeting held for all the teachers assign to help run the program. As this program was held at the school level, at least one special meeting with an

official minute would make a difference in making the program own by the whole school and the responsibility to make the program a success will not be a burden to the UBK alone.

Theories

Experiential learning best fit the program evaluation. Most of the activities prepared encouraged experiential learning as students will have to think on their own, on the best way to overcome or win the games or shows prepared for them. They will have to work as a team and shared whatever past and present knowledge they have for the indoor and outdoor games or shows events provided. Lewis and Williams (1994) define experiential learning as: In its simplest form, experiential learning means learning from experience or learning by doing. Experiential education first immerses learners in an experience and then encourages reflection about the experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking.

The first theories of experiential learning arose in the mid-nineteenth century as attempts to move away from traditional formal education, where teachers simply presented students with abstract concepts, and toward an immersive method of instruction. Students would "learn by doing", applying knowledge to experience in order to develop skills or new ways of thinking (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

Experiential learning is also built upon a foundation of interdisciplinary and constructivist learning. Experiential methodology does not treat every subject as being walled off in its own room, not connected to any other subjects. Compartmentalized learning doesn't reflect the real world, while as the experiential classroom works to create an interdisciplinary learning experience that mimics real world learning (Wurdinger, 2005). Similarly, "experiential learning is aligned with the constructivist theory of learning" in that the "outcomes of the learning process are varied and often unpredictable" and "learners play a critical role in assessing their own learning" (Wurdinger, 2005). How one student chooses to solve a problem will be different from another student, and what one student takes away from an experience will be different from the others.

Literature Review

Wood (2001) study focused on Stake's countenance model. This approach was used to evaluate the Chesapeake Watershed Ecology Course, an environmental science professional development course designed to educate teachers about research and instructional strategies that are used to investigate community environmental issues. Wood (2001) followed the model, highlighting the antecedents, transactions and outcomes. He followed even further by making a description matrix and a judgement matrix. Wood presents intents, observations, standards and judgements. The congruence in the study was achieved by looking at the outstanding characteristics of each course feature.

In Stake and Easley's study (1978), and the study by Stake (1986) are given as examples where responsive evaluation has been used in actual studies by Stake. These two examples are amongst the earliest studies that focused on the use of responsive evaluation approach as advocated by Stake. The other study that Stake carried out using a responsive evaluation approach was a meta-evaluation of a study coordinated by the American Institutes for Research. This was a study on the Cities-in-Schools program. The program was meant to help troubled young people from the ghettos. Stake (1986) explains the goal of the program as follows: "The goal was to find the most estranged youth of the urban ghetto and to bring them into the mainstream of urban society-ultimately to become educated and employed, legally respectable and humane."

The study on Students' Voice in Curriculum Making in Australia by Thornton and Chapman (2000) used Stake's responsive approach but within a quantitative framework. This is in line with Stake's (1995b) assertion that responsive evaluation should not be thought of as an approach that could only be used within qualitative approaches. In practice, evaluators draw from the strength of each of the two approaches, depending on the focus of what they are doing. The limitation of this study is that it did not

highlight the weaknesses and limitations of using responsive evaluation approach in program evaluation.

Based on these past studies, it is evident that Stake's approach is significant and has been used by evaluators in different countries for different purposes. It is an approach that is adaptable and suitable for use in different situations depending on what the evaluator would like to achieve. Its value lies in the fact that it can be used to evaluate different kinds of program. This approach is also flexible in that evaluators are able to use different kinds of data collection methods depending on the data needed for the evaluation process. Evaluators can respond to emerging issues and concerns as they arise, and the approach can be used to focus on different stages of the program, for example, just the implementation of the program or the effects of the program.

Research Methods

The method used for this evaluation was on the use of Stake's responsive evaluation approach focusing on Stake's countenance model in evaluating the implementation of the overall program. The responsive approach helped to get a deeper understanding of the concerns and problems raised by different stakeholders in the program. Adding to what evaluators should do in using responsive evaluation approach, Stake (in Dockrell and Hamilton, 1980) gives some advice: "Most evaluators can be faulted for over-reliance on preconceived notions of success. I advise the evaluator to give careful attention to the reasons the evaluation was commissioned, then pay attention to what is happening in the program, then choose the value questions and criteria. He should not fail to discover the best and the worst of program happenings. He should not let a list of objectives or early choice of data gathering instruments draw away from the things that most concern the people involved." This means that the evaluator must not allow the choice of research methods to influence an approach in leading an evaluation. The attention should be on what is truly happening in the program and the concerns of the stakeholders in the program.

The greatest strength of Stake's model is the manner in which intents and actions are defined and observed, together with standards and judgements. Stake believes that the starting off point is to determine the "intents" of a particular curriculum. These need to be described in terms of antecedents, transactions and outcomes. Antecedent intents relate to any conditions prior to the commencement of a curriculum and might include both students' and teachers' backgrounds and interests. Transaction intents are the procedures and events which it is expected will transpire as the curriculum unfolds. They take place in the classroom or teaching learning environment. Outcome intents are the intended student outcomes in terms of achievements, together with the anticipated effects upon teachers, administrators and other parties (Woods, 1998).

A distinction between descriptive matrix and judgement matrix were made. Descriptive matrix is divided into intents, which involve what the program intends to achieve, and observations, which involve what was actually observed. Judgement matrix are also divided into standards, which are then used to make judgements and actual judgements. Information in the descriptive matrix is analyzed by looking at the congruence between intents and observations. In the judgement matrix, the standards are used to make judgements. Diagram 1 shows how the evaluation of data are arrange in Stake's countenance model.

Qualitative evaluation Greene (1998) writes that qualitative evaluation approaches can be easily distinguished by "their preference for qualitative methods, including open-ended interviews, on-site observation, participant observation, and document review". Through qualitative evaluation, the researcher gains a 'holistic' overview of the culture and the context understudy. Other than that, data is captured on the perceptions of local actors "from the inside", through a process of deep attentiveness, of empathic understanding (verstehen), and of suspending or "bracketing" the researcher's preconceptions about the topics under discussion (Shaw, 1999).

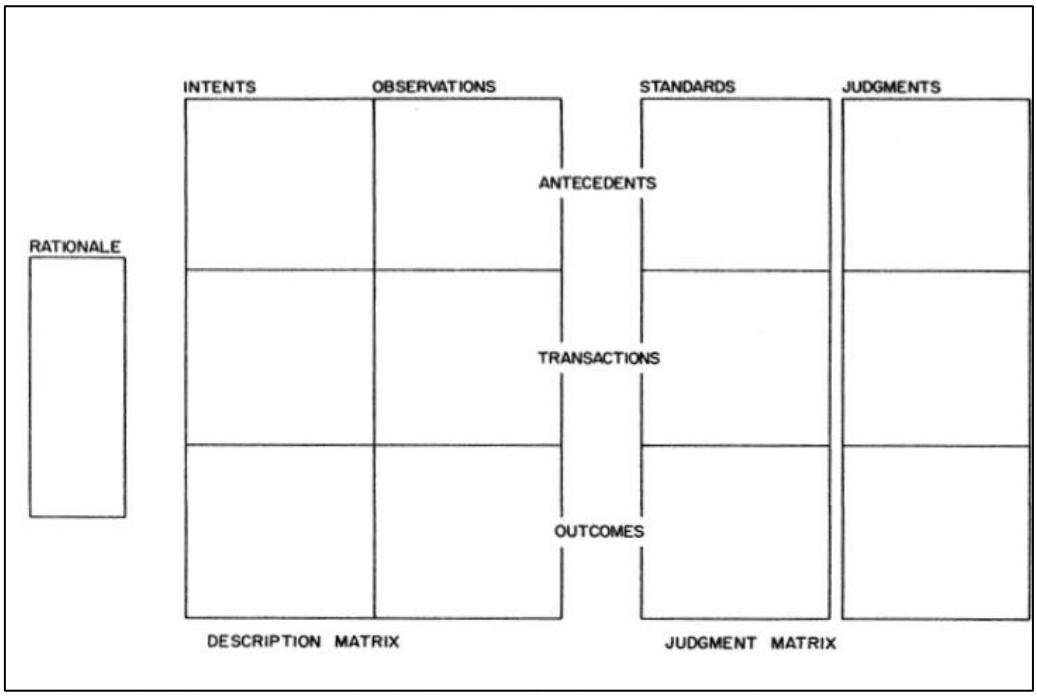


Diagram 1: Stake Countenance Model

Looking at these features, it is apparent that evaluators using the qualitative approach focus on understanding the program from the perspective of the participants in context. The researcher becomes an instrument in the process of collecting and analyzing the data.

The strengths of qualitative evaluation are that it focuses on naturally occurring events (Michael & Benson, in Husen & Postlethwaite, 1994; Shaw, 1999); It helps in the local groundedness and contextualisation of an evaluation (Michael & Benson, 1994; Shaw, 1999); it is helpful in understanding people's constructions of meanings in the context being studied (Greene, 2000). Qualitative methods used are summarized in table 1. These three methods of data collection (observation, interviewing and document analysis) were used and helped in triangulating the data collected.

Table 1: Methods of Data Collections

Methods	Respondents	Number of respondents
Observation	Students and teachers	All form 3 students and teachers on duty
Informal Interview	Counselors	2
Documents Analysis	Students' attendance	Before and after the program

Observation is regarded as a very important method in responsive evaluation. In 2004, Stake (2004a) refers to it as "the modus operandi" in program evaluation using the responsive approach. Through observation the evaluator was able to see what is happening in school in terms of the implementation of the program. Whether the activities planned in the program are being implemented or not. Whether the students are happy and enjoy or not of each of the activity provided. Most importantly whether the students are there in the venue events for every activity.

Informal conversational interview approach and semi-structured interview were used, in capturing issues that were not clear during observations of the program. The informal conversational interview helped the evaluator to talk with the teacher and participants on different issues about the activities in general and the implementation of the program. This helped them to relax and relate issues that they could not talk about in a formal setting. The issues that arose included the involvement of teachers on duty and their commitment of the program, challenges of the program and how they overcome them.

Document analysis is mainly looking at the students' attendance before and after the implementation of the program. Besides that, the evaluator was also given a copy of the program paper work and scheduled. Merriam (2002) state can be a document analysis of written documents, oral documents or artefact of old photographs. Public records, documents and materials of physical individuals are examples of documents that can be used as a reference document. The strength of the document as a data source because it exists in any situation does not prevent researchers to obtain.

Findings

On account of the data collected through observation, informal interview and document analysis on the Post PT3 program, the results of the evaluation is generalized in Stake's countenance model below (Table 2).

Table 2: Evaluation of Post PT3 Program 2017

Intent	Observation		Standard	Judgement
Paper work	Prepared by UBK	Antecedent (Plan)	All intended antecedents must be fulfilled.	There is a congruency of intended antecedent and observed antecedent.
Appointment/ calling/ Invitation letter	Distributed before the program commence.			
Budget allocation	Approved without issue.			
Scheduled	Activities were very transparent for the whole program.			
Reserved venue	Venue for each program was reserved but not fix (depending to unexpected other bigger program or weather).			
Briefing to all form three students.	A formal briefing of the program was only done on the second day after PT3 exam.	Antecedent (Plan)	All intended transactions must be implemented	There is congruency between intended transactions and observed transactions, with minor issues. Teacher's on duty did not turn up 3 classes were not able to perform in the science show
Student's attendance.	Attendance was taken the first thing in the morning.			
Commitment of teacher's on duty.	Encouraging but not fully committed in attendance.			
Sports events.	All eight classes had their representatives for each sports.			
Talents events.	Carried out with some class control issues.			

	Non-participating team (while waiting for their turn to play) wandered around the school, class and even play truant. All eight classes had their representatives for the creative art talent shows. Only five out of eight classes took part in the Science talent show.			
Talks: Elective subjects Drugs & Sexual Abuse Education after PT3	Conducted with students' attendance in the main school hall and in the hostel dining hall. Attendance of all invited speakers except for two elective subject.			
Creative Animation	Students show more interest in creative animation activity.			
Students' moral and social responsibility.	Mural painting on school's grand stand. Taken charge by PSK's teachers of each class.			
Implementation of activities as stated in the schedule.	Each activity was carried out as scheduled. Evaluation of the program was not implemented.			

Encouraging students' attendance.	Improvement of attendance in low achievement classes and vice versa for high achievement classes. Attendance Pre PT3 was 93.24% and Post PT3 was 93.64%. Increment of 0.40%.	Outcomes	All intended outcomes must be attained	There is congruency between intended outcomes and observed outcomes, with minor issues. Teachers assign to give the talk did not turn up (last minute notice) and no replacement done. Due to other workloads, the organizer were not able to distribute questionnaire for program evaluation.
Enjoyable indoor and outdoor activities.	Students managed to work as a team and present their performance happily.			
Meaningful and informative talks.	Two talks on form four elective subject were not conducted. Others were very informative.			
Students' moral and social responsibility.	The grandstand were painted colorfully. Clean surrounding.			

Are the intended antecedents congruent to the actual antecedents?

The standard for judgement matrix in intended antecedent was, all intended antecedents must be fulfilled. Based on the Stake's countenance model above, it is very obvious that there is 100% congruency between intended antecedent and actual antecedent. Through the evaluator's observation, the program was really well planned and well prepared.

Are the intended transactions congruent to the actual transactions?

The standard for judgement matrix in intended transactions was, all intended transactions must be implemented. Through the evaluator's observation and judgement, there is congruency between intended transactions and observed transactions but with minor issues. The minor issue here were related to the teachers' assign to help run the activities in the program. Even though their commitment were encouraging but their attendance for the program were still questionable. On the students' take, it was very unfortunate that three classes missed to perform science show.

Are the intended outcomes congruent to the actual outcomes?

The standard for judgement matrix in intended outcomes was, all intended outcomes must be attained. Through the evaluator's observation and judgement, there is congruency between intended outcomes and observed outcomes, with minor issues. The program was wholly taken charge by UBK, however there were a few selected teachers appointed to help in certain activities. Two talks on form four elective subjects were not conducted due to the speaker (teacher) absentee and without advance notice. Other than that, the evaluator think that it was very unfortunate that the program organizer fail to

distribute program evaluation questionnaire to the students. Otherwise an in-depth evaluation on strengths and weaknesses of every activity conducted can be evaluated.

Discussions

From the evaluator's observation, major concerns were lack of teachers' participation and commitment in the implementation of the program. Without the teachers' support, the implementation of the program may still be sustainable but the activities need to be revised especially the outdoor activities. Teachers' on duty and teachers who were supposed to be with their team need to be on the field to help control and support their students. If teachers are committed enough in their attendance to support their students in every event, this may help to avoid students playing truant along the program.
Besides that, the low achievement classes might have the strength and motivation to perform in the science show if they have support and guidance from the respective teachers. A little guidance would have make a difference. Leaving all the activities to be done by the counselor alone is impossible. Take for example, the mural painting activity. This activity was a sweet success, the grand stand was painted beautifully and was done by all the eight classes. The fact that the outcome of this activity was an excellent example may be because of it was taken charge by their committed respective Pendidikan Sivik dan Kewarganegaraan (PSK) teachers.

This program has been planned and activities transparently prepared excellently by UBK. Budget approved without any issue by the administration. The administrator could hold a formal meeting or at least brief the vision of the program to every teacher involved. Inform everyone involved the importance of supporting the program so that they have a better understanding of being there for their students.

There was a very slim increment in attendance before and during the program. Before the program the overall attendance of form three students was 93.24% and during the program 93.64%. A very slight increment of 0.4%. The first four higher achievement classes slightly decrease in attendance. However, during the program, the last three classes highly improves in their attendance. This phenomenal may be due to the activities prepared for post PT3 program. At least the overall attendance was maintaining and did not subsides.

Conclusions

Overall this Post PT3 program is a success. Students who participate in any of the activities planned and prepared do gain and learnt something that they do not learn in class. In this program the process of learning through experience were initiated. Students will have to share their present and previous knowledge to their team in order to come up with something to be performed on stage or win any games. Others who do not have any experience will learn from their friend on the spot. Ideas were express freely.

The program does accelerate students' learning. 'Learning by doing' is far more effective and long lasting than theoretical learning. Further, experiential learning also promotes development of multiple skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and effective decision-making at the same time. Creative art talent, science show talent, mural painting, sports games engaged students in various team-based activities thus training them on team building and leadership. This benefits them because they learn from each other and also because this will someday lead them to work in a team in a professional environment.

This program can help students transition more gracefully from school to work, and community-social and moral experiences prepare them to be more engaged citizens. This program can also improve the quality of liberal learning itself and increase the likelihood that students will be able to use throughout their lives the knowledge, critical abilities, and habits of mind acquired in along their experience in this

program. No doubt this post PT3 program worth to be sustained with support from the administration, staff and teachers.

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