

Accelerating The Improvement of Human Resources' Quality According to The Demand of Globalization
Through Media Education

ACCELERATING THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES' QUALITY ACCORDING TO THE DEMAND OF GLOBALIZATION THROUGH MEDIA EDUCATION

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Abstrak

Perlunya sumber daya manusia yang berkualitas sudah disadari oleh hampir seluruh bangsa di dunia. Disadari bahwa hanya bangsa yang memiliki sumber daya manusia yang berkualitas yang mampu hidup sukses dalam menghadapi tantangan-tantangan global. Meskipun telah banyak upaya yang dilakukan oleh negara-negara untuk meningkatkan kualitas sumber daya manusianya, namun masalah kualitas sumber daya manusia masih terdapat di mana-mana.

Memperhatikan kenyataan dan pengalaman dari banyak negara yang telah melaksanakan pendidikan media, nampaknya dewasa ini pendidikan media merupakan suatu keharusan sesuai tuntutan globalisasi dan perkembangan sosial yang cepat. Media pendidikan diharapkan mampu mengembangkan kemampuan berpikir kritis, berkomunikasi, menggunakan media sebagai alat komunikasi untuk tukar menukar informasi dan pengalaman untuk membentuk perilaku yang positif dalam menghadapi dan memecahkan masalah-masalah kehidupan dalam bidang politik, ekonomi, sosial, dan budaya. Agar dapat berhasil, maka pendidikan media hendaknya direncanakan secara matang dan sistematis, dan dilaksanakan dengan strategi yang tepat dan sempurna. Selain itu, dukungan yang cukup dari pemerintah dan masyarakat sangat diperlukan untuk memungkinkan terlaksananya dengan sukses pendidikan media itu untuk seluruh warga negara.

Kata kunci: globalisasi, kualitas sumber daya manusia, akselerasi, pendidikan media, dukungan pemerintah

Introduction

The need for high quality human resources in the present era of globalization has been realized by almost all nations in the world and especially by under-developed nations. It is realized that only nations with high-quality human resources can prosper in facing global challenges. Therefore, every country in the world has exerted a great deal of efforts to improve the quality of its human resources. But, in spite of that, realities seem to show us that the issue concerning the quality of human resources is still omnipresent.

In general, the main problems concerning the quality of human resources are: related to a lack of professional skills and a lack of abilities in critical thinking, in communication, and in using media as main aids in conducting communication to get and exchange information and experiences that can shape a proper behavior in dealing with problems of life concerning economic, political, social, and cultural issues. It seems that the educational programs offered to students in the past have not been specific enough to be effective in increasing such abilities mentioned above. Many meaningful experiences of many countries in the world that have been conducting education in media-related matters show us that the abilities mentioned above can be developed through programs of media education.

In considering the realities and experiences mentioned above, it seems that, currently, media education is a necessity to meet the demands of the rapid globalization and social development. Therefore, many countries in the world have been conducting it with a variety of purposes, objectives, contents, and strategies. Consequently, the kinds and the qualities of the outputs or outcomes are also quite varied. In some cases, both the processes and the outcomes are difficult to be measured because of unclear targets and indicators. Besides that, the issues around media education are quite broad in scope. These issues concern the components of media education: institutions, educators, equipment, targets, purposes or objectives, contents, methods, and assessment and evaluation. These issues concern even the problems behind all these issues.

To be successful, media education should be systematically planned and conducted with proper and adequate strategies. The strate-

gies should take into account all the components of education stated above as a system. Besides that, all the concepts used should be clearly defined.

Quality of Human Resources in the Era of Globalization

Globalization has brought a great effect on human life not only in economic terms but also in political, social, and cultural terms. Its effect can be positive or negative, depending on the quality of human resources. Indeed, human resources with low quality will fail whereas only human resources with high quality standards will succeed in facing the global challenges.

The high-quality human resources should have, and continually develop, the knowledge and skills of learning technologies to be able to appropriately use tools, resources, processes, and systems to retrieve, assess, and evaluate information from various media. They should also have the ability to use their knowledge and skills to solve problems, communicate clearly, and make clear decisions.

Due to the pressures of globalization we need to focus on properly developing human resources. Therefore, we need a system of education that provides students with generalized knowledge, problem-solving skills, communication abilities, and aptitude to information technology through media education.

How to Accelerate Improvements of Human Resources' Quality

The 21st century is an era of globalization and rapid development of information and communications technology. The exploration and development of human resources are very important. It is imperative that we strive to develop the full human potentials of our diverse populations to face the complex challenges of the future.

One of the keys to developing human resources' competitiveness is the quality of the formal education system. To promote human resources' development requires a new concept of the development. The development should be aimed at improving people's quality through education, their human capacity of adapting to globalization and information and communications technology, and their creativity and competitiveness in order to

promote a development through capacity building. It is also necessary to fully utilize modern information and communications technology by popularizing it and optimizing its method to improve learning. Education is not only a major means and channel for human resources' development but also a foundation for human capacity building.

In accelerating improvements of human resources' quality, Africans (The African Development Forum, 1999:1) have been making innovative use of new information and communications technologies (ICTs). They make transformations in education and learning by making a shift from the traditional methods where one teacher confronts many learners with a well-worn textbook to new technologies. They use new technologies that create the opportunity for the best minds to exchange information across vast distances, both within the same country and across the border between countries. They realize that the information can be shared and knowledge developed with large numbers of young learners by communicating across the geographical divide by means of the radio, the video, the computer, and the Internet.

The Concept of Media

The concept of media covers a wide range of meanings and scope. The term media comes from a Latin word and it means more than one medium. In communication, media represent communication channels. A medium is viewed as anything that carries information between a source and a receiver.

In education, media refer to the physical ways by which instructional messages are communicated. They are such objects as TV sets, printed materials, teachers, or computers. By type, media can be divided into printed media (such as books, brochures, leaflets, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, and study guides); displayed media (such as posters, real-life portraits, graphic materials, and models); projected media (such as overhead transparencies, slides, and film strips); audio recordings (such as audiocassettes and compact disks/CDs); motion pictures (such as films on wide screens or on TV, video compact disks/VCDs, and video games); and computer-based media (such as computer programs like CAI and CAL and materials in the Internet and web sites).

Because of this wide range of scope and types of media, in planning media education it is necessary to properly define what we mean.

The Concept of Media Education

Media education can be defined as the study and analysis of mass media. Through media education young people are expected to be able to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce media products. A media-educated person will be able to limit use of media; make positive media choices; select creative alternatives to media consumption; develop critical thinking and viewing skills; and understand the political, social, economic, and emotional implications of all forms of media.

The same as other types of education like health education, physical education, economic education, and political education, media education is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to the study of media. According to Thoman (2003a:1),

There is still much discussion on whether the correct term is “media education,” “media awareness,” or “media literacy.” It feels like “media literacy” will win out because of the mental association with “literacy” meaning the ability to “read” and process information in order to participate fully in society. However, “media education” is firmly entrenched in England, Australia and other countries pioneering the field. The term “media studies” is also used, particularly in Australia.

In Canada “media education deals with key media concepts, and focuses on broad issues such as the history and role of media in different societies, and the social, political, economic, and cultural issues related to the media” (Canadian, 2003:1). In England, a countrywide media education program deals with four general areas (Laderer, 2003:1) as follows:

1. The sources, origins and determinants of media constructions, i.e., who is creating media?
2. The dominant techniques and coding employed by the media to convince us of the truth of their representations; i.e., how do media use technology to cut, edit, and present information in the most powerful and convincing forms? How does mass media presentation of information affect the information itself? Does it change in any way? If so, how?

3. The nature of the “reality” constructed by the media: i.e., the values implicit in media representation, the characteristics of the world as media presents them, and
4. The ways in which media constructions of reality are received and understood by the general public. The major goal of media education in Britain is not just to teach children and adults critical awareness of mass media, but also to promote what they call “critical autonomy: the ability of an individual to apply critical judgments to all media texts (print and electronic).”

In the United States there is no national program or curriculum on media studies at the primary, secondary, or college level. There are a few universities in the country which offer degrees in media studies. They are mainly focused on the technology of communications that teach students how to produce films, newscasts, and entertainment.

Why We Need and What We Expect From Media Education

It has been realized in general that media can bring a lot of benefits to the development of human resources. As mentioned above, media are the main aids to communication conducted to get and exchange information and experiences that can shape a proper behavior in dealing with problems of life concerning economic, political, social, and cultural issues. Media can give examples of good behavior, of the good of tolerance and peace, and of respect for human rights. The potential benefits that media offer are clear, from selected educational television programs to thought-provoking magazine articles, to the creativity and knowledge encouraged through computer use.

But it has been realized also that media have potentially negative influence or harmful effect on the life of children and adolescents and not rarely give negative influence on political, security, and cultural aspects of life. In media there are myriad of harmful media messages seen or heard by children and adolescents. The American Academy of Pediatrics (1999a: 1-2) reports that

More than 1000 scientific studies and reviews conclude that significant exposure to media violence increases the risk of aggressive behavior in certain

children and adolescents, desensitizes them to violence, and makes them believe that the world is a “meaner and scarier” place than it is. Violence appears in various forms of media entertainment, such as movies, video games, and television news. Research has shown that news reports of bombings, natural disasters, murders, and other violent crimes have the potential to traumatize young children.

Furthermore, the American Academy of Pediatrics (1999b:2) reports that

American media, both programming and advertising, are highly sexualized in their content. In fact, the average young viewer is exposed to >14 000 sexual references each year, yet only a handful provides an accurate portrayal of responsible sexual behavior or accurate information about birth control, abstinence, or the risks of pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease

It is no wonder that many parents who do not understand the benefits of media for their children, especially those in developing countries, exert every effort to prevent their children from accessing media and especially the Internet. These efforts result in hindrances in the development of human resources. Besides that, psychologically, all kinds of prevention of children and adolescents from accessing media without proper and rational arguments given will result in passive resentment from children and adolescents. The more parents prevent their children from accessing the media, the more likely the children will want to access the media and especially to pursue the harmful media messages.

It is clear that media education has the potential power to reduce these harmful effects of media through the process of educating children, adolescents, and adults about media. Media education is defined as the study and analysis of mass media. Media education can help people to be able to decipher the purpose and message of media rather than accepting it at face value. By understanding media images and messages, people can recognize the potential effects of media and make good choices about their and their children's media exposure. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (1999a:2),

A media-educated person understands the following: all media messages are constructed; media messages shape our understanding

of the world; individuals interpret media messages uniquely; and mass media have powerful economic implications. A media-educated person will be able to limit use of media; make positive media choices; select creative alternatives to media consumption; develop critical thinking and viewing skills; and understand the political, social, economic, and emotional implications of all forms of media

In addition, media education is expected to protect anyone and especially young people from the negative impact of the harmful media information and messages seen and heard by children and adolescents. Media education represents a multifaceted approach to understanding and eliminating the negative impact of media images and messages on young people. At the same time, it allows the positive and pro-social uses of media to be explored and appreciated. Media education helps people to increase their abilities, including the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce media products.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (1999:3), "Research strongly suggests that media education may result in young people becoming less vulnerable to negative aspects of media exposure." In several studies, children in elementary school-based programs were able to evaluate program and advertising content more critically. In other studies, heavy viewers of violent programming were less accepting of violence or showed decreased aggressive behavior after a media education intervention. A recent study found a change in attitudes regarding intention to drink alcohol after a media education program.

Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and some Latin American countries have successfully incorporated media education into school curricula. Common sense would suggest that increased media education in the United States could represent a simple, potentially effective approach to combating the myriad of harmful media messages seen or heard by children and adolescents.

In Canada and Great Britain media education is intended to develop students' ability to think critically and independently about issues that affect them. Through media education, students are encouraged to identify and examine the values contained in media messages. Students are expected

to analyze media products (in terms of purposes, values, representation, codes, conventions, characteristics, and production). Media education is also intended to cultivate students' understanding that media messages are produced by others to inform, persuade, and entertain for a variety of purposes. Students are expected to analyze audience interpretation and influence, i.e., interpretation of the influence of media on audience and the influence of audience on media. Media education is also intended to help students understand the distortions that may result from the use of particular media practices and techniques. In Canada there are learning opportunities for media education in all curriculum areas

(http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/mathk7/appcme_.htm).

How to Manage Media Education

Because of the very wide scope of media education concerning the purposes, objectives, contents, strategies, other media and teaching aids required, and even the reason behind the need of conducting media education, media education should be conducted in the form of formal, non-formal, and informal education. This article focuses only on formal media education.

In Canada media education is not taught as a separate curriculum. In Ontario, identifying media education as an essential curricular component is considered as an important first step in developing this subject area but it is acknowledged that much work needs to be done to bring media education into the classroom (http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/media_education-media_education_overview.cfm.)

Similarly, in other European countries (Laderer, 2003:1), media education has been introduced at all levels of educational systems. For example, in Finland, "primary and secondary school curricula have been developed to train students in the examination and interpretation of messages from the mass media, to encourage critical analysis of such messages, and to teach students how to develop their own independent opinions about messages transmitted in mass media." In addition to classroom work: i.e. research, analysis, evaluation, and study of production methods, students also receive "hands on" training in the practical aspects of media – for example, editing

newspapers, learning how to shoot, edit, produce, and distribute evening news pieces for television and radio, and operating cable television stations. Students also study the politics of mass media in Finland and other countries, including the control of the media, the business of mass media industry, channels of communication, and other global media issues.

Components required for Development of Media Education in Formal Education

In conducting media education successfully, as in any formal education, there are at least five components which should be planned and prepared properly.

1. Clear curriculum design. The curriculum should be designed clearly, especially in relation to the aim of the curriculum, the required competency to be mastered by the students, and the proper material to be taught. Such a curriculum should be designed by appropriate educational authorities.
2. Trained teacher. To be successful in teaching in media education, the teacher should be well trained through teacher training programs in media studies at the university level. They need to be trained both to increase their knowledge and understanding of the media and train them in appropriate teaching methods.
3. Proper content or materials to be taught. The content should be adequately relevant with the required competency to be mastered by the students.
4. Adequate media and other teaching aids to be used.
5. The effective teaching strategies to be implemented.

The development of the components mentioned above requires adequate funding and educational resources for teaching and especially for writing textbooks, lesson plans, activity sheets, videos or other audio-visual materials, posters, supplementary booklets, etc. needed for teaching. According to Thoman (2003:3) there are four elements required for development of media education in every country. "Unless a country has all four elements in place, ongoing, and in sync with each other, it will not be able to successfully implement media education for all of its citizens". The four elements are.

1. Establishment of curriculum guidelines (nationally or regionally) by appropriate educational authorities.
2. Teacher training programs at the university level. This is not a degree program in journalism or broadcasting (which are primarily career-oriented) but rather degree programs in education with a specific specialization or major in “media studies.”
3. Teacher support — in-service educational programs, summer “refresher courses, “ national organizations (similar, e.g., to National Council for Teachers of English), etc. through which teachers grow and develop in their chosen specialization — and through which the specialization itself evolves and develops through feedback by grassroots teachers.
4. Educational resources for teaching — writing, testing and publishing of the textbooks, lesson plans, activity sheets, videos or other A-V materials, posters, supplemental booklets, etc. needed for teaching — developed in collaboration with all of the above.
(www.medialit.org/reading_room/article126.html)

Conclusion

1. Media education plays an important role in accelerating the improvement of human resources' quality. Therefore, media education is a necessity.
2. The scope of media education is very wide so that it needs to be conducted in all forms of education, i.e., formal, non-formal, and informal education.
3. To conduct and develop media education successfully, every component needs to be planned and prepared properly.
4. In formal education it is necessary to incorporate media education in the curriculum right from the elementary school level to the university level.
5. Without adequate supports from the government and community in any country, it will not be possible to successfully implement media education for all of its citizens.

Recommendation

1. Because of the very important role of media education, it should be conducted in the form of formal, non-formal, and informal education.
2. Governments or competent authorities should initiate and support comprehensive media education programs right from the elementary school level to the university level, and in adult education — the purpose of which is to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which will encourage the growth of critical awareness and, consequently, of greater competence among users of electronic and print media. Ideally, such programs should include the analysis of media products and the use of media as a means of creative expression.
3. To conduct and develop media education successfully every required component should be planned and prepared properly.
4. In formal education media education should be incorporated in the curriculum right from the elementary school level to the university level.
5. Governments and communities should give adequate support to the development of media education in order to be able to successfully implement media education for all of its citizens

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