SKILLS BASED TEACHING LEARNING METHODOLOGY (SBTLM) ARISING THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE WIDYATAMA UNIVERSITY GRADUATES’ COMPETITIVENESS

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Abstract

Widyatama University, in its effort to improve graduates' competitiveness towards the creation of job fields (entrepreneurship), has improved Soft Skills Based Teaching Learning Methodology (SBTLM) through the curricular activities. Professional success is not only determined by the higher academic achievement but also the existence of soft skill performances. In 2002, National Association of Colleges and Employers of America concludes that Annual Grade is not the only important thing in the world of work. Generally, users require graduates with 82% of soft skill performance and 18% only for their hard skills.

This research is aimed at studying SBTLM through the Student Centre Learning (SCL) approach in students’ activities that improve their soft skill performance. It also studies the development of the soft skills through SBTLM by inserting these soft skills to the entrepreneurship-potential subjects so that it may, at the same time, improve the graduates’ competitiveness. Empirical paired observation method and the approach used is experimental design, kind of longitudinal testing.

The results show that SBTLM with the SCL approach through curricular activities does improve students’ soft skills and improves graduates’ competitiveness as well.

At this point, SBTLM is not performed optimally for various obstacles. They are: less improving academic in operational concept into the learning process, the lack of understanding and concerns from both students and lecturers to the new paradigm of learning process, less supporting aids for the measurement of the soft skill performance, and the structure and time allocated for the execution itself. However, there needs to be a concrete way to overcome this: comprehend the concept, milestones and aids for the execution, and intense socialization.

Key words: Soft Skills, SBTLM, Entrepreneur, and Competitiveness.

1. Introduction

Widyatama University, as a university that is responsive and bothers about its graduate quality, maintains the efforts of improving the graduate’s competitiveness. In regard to the fulfilment of needs of the potential graduates maximally, the orientation is directed to the ability to create work opportunities other than to be able to work for others.
The current condition shows that the quality of Indonesian Human Resource is at low level, even more their competitiveness\(^1\) is degrading. Regionally, Indonesian Human resource is at the lowest level compared to that of the Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and even Philippine, that is in the rank of 52\(^2\). The competitiveness of Indonesian in 1998 had been in the grade of 40 from 45 countries, it was then degrading to 59 from 60 countries in 2005. This condition brings great demand for Widyatama University to direct its policies noted in Institutional Development Strategic Planning of 2003-2013. This planning describes the development of “Widyatama Soft Skills Based Teaching - Learning Methodology”.

The significant of soft skill development for potential undergraduate is based on the reality that professional achievement is not only determined by higher academic achievement. The research performed by National Association of Colleges and Employers in United States summarizes that Grade per Annual (GPA) is not regarded as the only important thing in the job field; it is in the 17th of 20 considered capabilities of any potential undergraduates. Generally, users require graduates with 82% of soft skills capability and only 18% of their hard skills. The 20 abilities are: (1) communicative, (2) honest, (3) cooperative, (4) interpersonal, (5) ethic, (6) motivated/initiative, (7) adaptable, (8) analytic, (9) computer, (10) organizational, (11) detail oriented, (12) leadership, (13) confidence, (14) friendly, (15) polite, (16) wise, (17) Grade per annual, (18) creative, (19) humorist, (20) entrepreneurship.\(^3\)

Long Term Development of Widyatama University is oriented to result graduates with adaptive & competitive competencies required for becoming entrepreneur in private sector or becoming employee in private enterprises.

These two aspects require not only a fine academic achievement but also a relevant soft skills capability. Widyatama University Renstra contends that adaptive and competitive competencies of its graduates should comprise generic and specific competencies, defined in every Departments in the University\(^4\).

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4. *Ibid*
Based on the Tracer Study, the graduates’ profile of Widyatama University describes that 97% are employed and only 3% of them become entrepreneur. The data, however, still shows the low rank of Widyatama’s graduates who have the so-called entrepreneurship capability. In relation to the globalization process, demanding graduates’ competitiveness, reorienting educational system is then required. Learning system by way of using systematic and structurized soft-skill approach based on the guidelines is definitely a new thing. This brings difficulty that the limited knowledge regarding the soft-skill concept and the insufficient measurement instruments have caused ineffective and blurring measure of achievement.

Based on that problems, at this moment, the learning system in Widyatama University is still orienting to the content with less emphasis on student participation (teacher learning centered), several lecturers have integrated soft-skill contained lecture in their learning method though. Nevertheless, the activity is not structurally instituted, causing less-measured result of achievement.

In relation to that, Widyatama University necessarily realizes to improve students’ soft-skills through their curricular activity embedded to particular lectures, by using the approach of more-student-participation (Student centre learning) and the learning method that sharpens students’ soft-skill. This learning system is expected to be able to improve students’ soft-skill and personality through the continuous curricular activities so that the graduates are profiled to be an entrepreneur or competitive employee.

2. Theoretical Background

In order to create competitive graduates to be ready in private sectors for both entrepreneur and employee in private enterprise, significant changes on learning model is a must. This model not only puts emphasis on mastering the hard-skill but also on mastering appropriate soft-skill through the “Soft Skills Based Teaching - Learning Methodology”
Mayurkumar Gadewar says, soft skills are very important in business. It is essential to be technically sound, but one should also *have the ability to convey the idea to the masses in the simplest possible manner.*

A Leadership Wake-up Call: more and more corporations around the world recognize that, in order to gain a competitive advantage, they also need to make sure their people *know how to handle themselves at work and how to relate with their customers and peers.*

Competence concept according to David Mc Clelland is defined as “personal characteristics that differentiate levels of performance in a given job, role, organization, or culture. Any characteristic, mental, physical, emotional, that leads to outstanding performance in a given job is considered a competency for that job”. According to L.M Spencer, competencies have been clustered on the basis of underlying intent, which is a level of analysis between deep underlying social motives and superficial behaviors. An intent is specific to a particular circumstance and has a more ephemeral and surface quality than an underlying motive or disposition. Competent behaviors can be driven by one or more social motives in combination.

One who has required competencies for a particular function/task shows better *performance* compared to those who have less competencies. The competencies are *skill, knowledge, social role value, self-image, trait, motive.*

Spencer & Spencer, states that there is a relationship among *knowledge, skill, and attitude.* “Soft skills refer to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job”. Berthal says that personal and interpersonal behaviours develop and maximize human performance (e.g. coaching team building, decision-

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making, and initiative). Soft skills do not include technical skills, such as financial, computer or assembly skills. Wikipedia says that soft skills refer to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, and facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job.

Soft skills can be defined as personal ability to perform social interaction for intrapersonal, interpersonal and extrapersonal that support technical competencies possessed by the pertinent person to gain his career achievement.

3. Research Method
Empirical paired observation, performed by testing the students significant of soft-skill capability level before they are treated with SBTLM and to those who have been treated with SBTLM. The approach used is experimental design, kind of longitudinal testing.

4. SBTLM with SCL and KBK approaches through curricular activities that improve student soft-skills

The changing roles of Higher Education from Old Industrial Education to Entrepreneurial Education causes the changes of education paradigm. At first, education more focuses on teacher, material, and intelligence (Teacher Centre Learning), whereas nowadays it focuses more on the students, process, users’ needs, and intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligences of the graduates (Student Centre Learning).

Aware of the changes, Widyatama University in line with the National Education Department establish a direction and policy noted in Institutional Development Strategic Planning of 2003-2013 comprising Softskills Based Teaching Learning Methodology. This is expected to incarnate the goals of Widyatama University, that is to create graduates who have the ability to develop themselves in Global Society; to be Competitive Behavior as Entrepreneur and private Enterprise.

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11 ibid
12 ibid
Softskills Based Teaching Learning Methodology emphasizes on competency based curriculum (KBK) by focusing on the student centered learning. This is expected to improve effective learning and grow not only technical skills (hard skills) but also soft skills as the complementary element to hard skills, which is urgently required in the world of work.

Competency based curriculum (KBK) noted in Softskills Based Teaching Learning Methodology contains a set of planning and organizing elements that manage the content, the material, learning method, and evaluation method. This set comprises core curriculum that represents the characteristics of Widyatama, that the graduates are oriented to have the ability of adaptive and competitive competencies as well as being competitive in global society. These competencies are significantly useful once they enter the private sector, whether they are entrepreneurs or employees in private enterprises. All of these elements are noted in the Learning Goal at each Department, in line with the learning goal of Widyatama University.

The implementation of Softskills Based Teaching Learning Methodology is conducted through the sequence of selecting softskill attribute priority supporting the goal of adaptive and competitive competencies in the global society; Entrepreneurship and Private Enterprises. Nine softskill attributes are elected; Learning, Problem Solving and Analysis, Personal Strength, Risk Taking, Visioning, Oral Communication, Leadership and Influence, Personal Organization and Time Management, Creativity, Innovation and Change, from a number of 17 (seventeen) softskill attributes. Other softskill attributes are Personal Strength, Coordinating, Decision Making, Managing Conflict, Planning and Organizing, Communication, Interpersonal, Listening, Written Communication, Mobilizing Innovation and Change, Ability to Conceptualize, and Visioning. Among them, the attributes chosen are Learning, Problem Solving and Analysis, Personal Strength, Risk Taking, Visioning, Oral Communication, Listening, Personal Organization and Time Management, Creativity, Innovation and Change.

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The learning process for the elected courses is by way of using the Student Center learning (SCL) method as well as Competence Based Curriculum; Small Group Discussion, Role-Play & Simulation, Case Study, Discovery Learning (DL), Self-Directed Learning (SDL), Cooperative Learning (CL), Collaborative Learning (Cbl), Contextual Instruction (CI), Project Based Learning (PjBL), Problem Based Learning and Inquiry (PBL).

The next step is deciding the course to be embedded to the potential softskill element. This will then sharpen students’ softskills in accordance with the learning goal of Widyatama University, as well as Department learning goal, which supports the Entrepreneurship and Private Enterprise competencies. One course that is selected in Accounting Department is Financial Management, the Problem Solving, Analysis, and Communication attributes are inserted to the lecture. The learning model applied is “Quantum Teaching” that meets the requirements of Problem Based Learning Contextual Instruction Simulation. Discovery Learning. It is the implementation of KBK that the lecturers provide books, material, journal, research findings, and time. Students are motivated mindfully, provide them with relevant material to their ability and their contextual situation. Lecturers encourage and entrust the students that they can reach the competencies of their expectation. Show them our appreciation, our guide, and our method that may help them in overcoming any problems related to the course material. Give them our feedback, monitor them, and correct them in their frame of thinking/achievement so that they can reach their optimum goal regarding two aspects involved: hard skill and soft skills.

Learning evaluation used to measure softskill ability is the “Direct Assessment Techniques”, it is an observation (Rubric) and Focus Groups Discussion during lecturing. Pre-test is performed in the first of the lecture and post-test is performed at the end of the lecture before the final test (the 14th meeting). Self and peer Assement are applied to both tests. The SBTLM implementation in the 2009-2010 odd semester shows that there is softskill improvement for the Accounting Management subject, less significant though. The oncoming obstacles are

18 Mary J. Allen, “Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education”
insufficient tools for measuring softskills, structures, and allocated time for the execution. To get used to it, we may need longer time to evaluate it, 3 semesters at least.

5. Students’ softskill ability improvement through SBTLIM may emerge entreprenurship competencies that improve the graduates’ competitiveness.

Highlighting the low level of Indonesian human resource in competitiveness, it tends to degrade (Indonesia was in the 40th among 45 countries in 1998 and in the 59th from 60 countries in 2005), Widyatama University has established a program of Development called "Widyatama Soft Skills Based Teaching - Learning Methodology" in its Renstra of Institutional Development of 2005-2013.

The importance of improving students’ softskills is based upon the fact that professional success is not only determined by the higher academic achievement but also the existence of soft skill performances. National Association of Colleges and Employers of America concludes that Annual Grade is not the only important thing in the world of work; it is impact in the 17th of 20 considered capabilities of any potential undergraduates. Generally, users require graduates with 82% of soft skill performance and 18% only for their hard skills.  

Long-term Development Planning of Widyatama University is oriented to create graduates with adaptive and competitive competencies. These competencies are required for student to work in private sector, whether as entrepreneur or employee in private enterprise.

Graduates’ softskill improvement may provide opportunity, space, and time to improve their potential. Graduates serve not only as productive resources but also as human capital who have great competitiveness in the era of creative economy, the nation’s economic establishment is recently shifted from comparative factors to creative economy. Creative economy does not depend mostly on production factors (natural resources, capital, human resources), rather it is created by the creativity of

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20 ibid
human capital. In this case, the graduates play an important role in creating the innovative and creative skill and ability.\textsuperscript{23}

By the well-planned growing softskill ability in university, it is expected that it may lead the national human resources’ competitiveness to the improvement of nation competitiveness.

The graduates’ profile of Widyatama University describes that 97% are employed and only 3% of them become entrepreneur.\textsuperscript{24} The data, however, still shows the low rank of Widyatama’s graduates who have the so-called entrepreneurship capability. Whereas, the phenomenal progress of Information Technology and Communication that accelerates the globalization process becomes the biggest challenges for the system of higher education in preparing its graduates for the professional world. In this indefinite circumstance, the planning of higher education cannot rely mostly upon national orientation in the field of work. Therefore, entrepreneurship is the most prominent solution and becomes the identified competence in improving graduates relevant softskills. This then becomes the basis for the improvement of system and model of learning.

_Entrepreneur is neither a science nor a art, it is a practice_,\textsuperscript{25} whereas entrepreneurship characteristics comprise: motivated, highly achieved, creative, highly innovated, responsible, committed to work, independent, dare to take the risk, always look for opportunity, and have the leadership/managerial spirit.\textsuperscript{26} *Soft Skills Based Teaching - Learning Methodology*, as an appropriate learning model for integrating the potential entrepreneurship character with the effective learning system, can conjoin students’ hardskill and softskill. This will then result in cultured system environment and value and entrepreneurship behaviour as well.

The characters of Entrepreneur consist of: passionate, independent, market sensitive, creative & Innovative, calculated risk taking, persistent and high ethical standard. According to “Entrepreneurship Center Ciputra University” (UCEC) this character are built from the constructed frame of mind (mindset), the characters and

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{24} Data profil lulusan Widyatama University pada tahun 2006.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid
adroitness in creating opportunity to innovate and to take risk\textsuperscript{27} can be performed through the learning process of \textit{Soft Skills Based Teaching - Learning Methodology}. In Widyatama University, softskill attribute improving consists of Creativity, Inovation and Change, Risk taking and other attributes.

SBTLN is performed with the orientation towards SCL and KBK approach. It is expected that this may balance the science and its application with their long-term orientation in order to fulfil the needs for any job sectors (Stakeholders)\textsuperscript{28}. The course elected, to which entrepreneurship ability embeds, is the course of Entrepreneurship, Management and Industrial Engineering Departments implement this course. Recently, according to alumnae tracer in 2010, graduates with entrepreneurship profiles are improved. In 2006, the employed graduates are 97\% and 3\% for entrepreneur. Whereas currently in 2010, the employed graduates are 92\% and 8\% for the entrepreneur. The obstacles faced are the weak of academic development and operated concept into the teaching-learning process and the lack of students and lecturer comprehensions towards the new paradigm of learning process.

a. Conclusions

1). SBTLN with SCL and KBK approaches through curricular activities embedded to potential courses may sharpen and improve students’ softskills. However, the improvement has not reach its optimum level because the measuring tools are insufficient, lack of supporting structures, and the less of allocated time for the execution. Softskill ability is a habitual process; therefore, it requires continuous and longer time of execution for the participant to be accustomed so that the result is appropriately measured.

2) Students’ softskill ability improvement through SBTLN may emerge entrepreneur ship competencies that improve the graduates’ competitiveness. The obstacles faced are the weak improvement of academically operated concept into the teaching-learning process and the

\textsuperscript{27} Sinta Dewi Herawati “Peranan Softskills Dalam Pengembangan Jiwa Entrepreneurship” Seminar Internal Universitas Widyatama, Bandung 2010.

\textsuperscript{28} ibid
lack of understanding and awareness from students and lecturers towards the new paradigm of learning process.

2). Recommendation

1) Insufficient measurement instrument for measuring soft-skill, the structures, and time allocated for the treatment. This requires concrete action to complete this instrument by continuously and gradually performing soft-skill treatment of at least 3 times in one semester.

2) Improving soft-skill ability to create entrepreneurship spirit needs the support from the university. Therefore, intensive socialization is required to comprehend SBTLM as a new paradigm in learning process and its effort in improving the competitiveness of graduates, lecturers, and other academic elements.

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