

National philosophy of education – assignment

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In Malaysia, education is a continuous attempt to maximum individual potentials in order to create a physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually person who believes in God and firmly hold on to his/her respective religious teachings. In order to achieve the goal, teachers especially, have to play a vital role in educating the students who will be able to perform their duties as responsible citizens. However, there are several challenges that are faced by the nation in producing a 'good man' who is balanced in all aspects.

Hence, this paper will discuss three challenges towards making National Philosophy of Education (NPE) a reality in the Malaysian society and approaches that are taken in order to make the aspirations a certainty. The challenges are the lack of exposure on Emotional Intelligence (EQ) in classroom, poverty among Malaysian students and negative impacts due to the advancement of technology. Challenges towards making NPE a reality in the Malaysian society a)The Lack of Exposure on Emotional Intelligence (EQ) in Classroom

EQ as mentions by Bar-On (1997, as cited in Butler, 2006), is an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environment demands and pressures. In Malaysia, based on the NPE, it is the aim of the government to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced. Now, the question is, is our culture has enough insights to generate citizens who are globally balanced?

A project paper entitled Problem-Oriented Project Based Learning in Environmental Management and Technology (2006) states that it is an at present challenge for the universities in Malaysia to produce employable graduates due to the incapability of the examination-based culture to create a conducive learning environment for the students to think critically, to communicate and collaborate effectively. This is due to the fact that many undergraduates in Malaysia come from an examination-oriented culture that lacks the ingredients to develop both the intelligence and emotional areas (Berhannuddin, 2007).

The most apparent example is when students who study in Malaysia, have to take at least three major examinations throughout eleven years of learning. Those examinations are Primary School Assessment (UPSR), Lower Secondary Assessment (PMR) and Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM). The latter-mentioned assessments are very essential for the students as it will determine their prospect in the future. As a result of this circumstance, the student's ability is limited in reproducing knowledge within a written assignment.

Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye (Lee) made a statement that examination-based culture has undeniably led to pressure from parents towards their children to perform in schools. This statement is made referring to the incident of the 12-year-old Subashini Sivakumar who hanged herself because of the discontent in her UPSR examination result. Hence, this situation is proven by the statistics that is given by Kuala Lumpur Hospital that stress at school and at home were the major contributory factors to the increase in mental problems in the country (Bernama, 2008).

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With these problems, it is a big challenge for this country to generate students who are physically, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally balanced when the education system is only focused on the constructing of the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) rather than the building of the Emotional Intelligence. Based on the situations that are above-mentioned, it is proven that IQ and EQ are equally important in producing a balanced individual. This is supported by a research made by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning [CASEL] (2003, as cited in Bencivenga & Elias, 2003, pg. 1) “ recent research in emotional intelligence, brain friendly learning, and social-emotional influences on learning and performance has shown that social and emotional competencies are an integral part of academic success. ” Husna Yusop (2006) also stresses on a self-confidence of a student must not be solely tied to academic achievement in one or two examinations but it must be grounded on the schooling and socialization process beyond the academic paper and examination. Hence, actions should be taken in order to ensure that the NPE aspirations will become a reality.

Mental Health Promotion is one of the modus operandi that is taken in order to avoid stress among children in schools that derived from the examination-oriented culture (Bernama, 2008). In this program, activities that could be implemented are promoting health literacy in the school community through talks, exhibitions and quizzes could be held as extra-curricular activities in schools. These activities are opted to instill basic self-confidence in the children so that any failures or disappointments will be seen as opportunities to try again rather than as a lack of ability and taking the road to disaster.)Poverty among Malaysian Students Poverty comprises children

who live in rural areas all around Malaysia. Merriam-Webster Online Search defines poverty as the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Siwar, Chamhuri, and Mohd. Yusof Kasim (1997) states that causes of urban poverty are multidimensional. They include structural, institutional and cultural factors. Urban poverty is growing as a result of the unequal distribution of wealth and income (Abdul Rahim, 2002).

Findings by Johari and Kiong (1991) attempt to develop a rough profile of the urban poor in Sabah. It includes that the urban poor are found in all ethnic groups, the urban poor are wage earners and concentrated in low wage sectors, they have low level of education, limited access to employment opportunities, social facilities and services. This finding is also supported by a research done by Ahi Sarok (n. d.) regarding Dayak citizens who live in the rural areas. They are lacking of computer skills because they can hardly get the opportunities to experience the condition themselves.

Furthermore, low self-concept among the students who live in poverty demotivated them to take part in classroom discussion (Ahi Sarok, n. d.). Hence, the students will be lagged in many aspects due to their self-esteem crisis. In addition, according to Ahi Sarok (n. d.), the students who live in rural areas are exposed to disciplinary problems. This is because of they give more attention to outdoor activities instead of activities that are held in the classroom since they do not have any goals in their lives for the reason that they are aware they will end up similar to their previous ancestors.

Situations above-mentioned are the evidence that poverty among Malaysian students is a challenge in producing a balanced individual as what has been stated in the NPE. They have low IQ due to the lack of education facilities to equip them with enough knowledge. This is mentioned by Ahi Sarok (n. d.) that the students achieved lower grades especially in Mathematics, Science and English subjects. The unprivileged students also lack of spiritual insights since they do not believe in the opportunity that they might get by studying.

They believe that they will only inherit their ancestors' job such as working at a farm or at a construction site although they strive hard in their examination such as SPM. Hence, it is proven that poverty among Malaysian students is one of the challenges in accomplishing the NPE. Efforts to eliminate poverty among Malaysian students and at the same time to produce students physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually balanced were many and varied. Various aids to poor students in primary and secondary schools, such as free text books, free breakfast to ensure they will pay attention when during their lessons in the classroom.

Furthermore, underprivileged students who excel in their examination will be selected to study in boarding schools set up by the government all over the country which consist of modern facilities and proper environment for study. According to M. Bakri Musa (2008), another effective soft support would be to provide childcare services in poor urban neighborhoods so mothers could go out to work. By having these mothers entering the workforce, whether as factory workers or domestic help, they would learn useful social skills, while their children would get good care and nutrition, better than what they would get at home.)Negative Effects Due to The Advancement of Technology

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Despite of all the positive impacts due to the advancement of technology, Malaysian nowadays have to be aware of the negative effects that might harm the students development in order to attain the aspiration of the NPE. Children in Malaysia these days are exposed to various types of technology advancement. One of the advancements that kids might be exposed to is the media which comprises the console games that are widely spread all around Malaysia at these present days.

In this era, Super Mario is not the only console game that is dominating the child's mind; there are various types and genres of games that can be purchased in local stores. What is most worried nowadays is the establishment of video games that promote violence to the players. The Godfather, Tekken 3 and Grand Theft Auto are the examples of the console games that endorse belligerent attitude. Grand Theft Auto for instance, it requires the player to be a gang leader and steal cars. Grossman (n. d. , as cited in Carter, n. d. contends that violence in games leads to violent behavior in kids. Borum (n. d.) conducted a research and he found a minority of kids involved in violent incidents were fans of violent-themed video games. Referring to this research, Borum (n. d. , as cited in Carter, n. d.) adds on that a small but significant relationship between video game aggression and subsequent aggressive behavior in children. The examples of aggressive behaviors that might occur in relation with the violent type of video game are yelling, shouting mean things and play anything that is related to shooting.

Based on the findings that are above-mentioned, it is proven that the advancement of technology, in violent video games particularly might

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disrupt the NPE aspiration from been achieved. The world once was alarmed by the incidents that involved the killing of 32 people by a South Korean student who later shot himself to death (Hopkins & Zengerler, 2007). This brutal tragedy happened at Virginia Tech University. In Malaysia, there are also incidents that end tragically. On March 28 2004, the nation was shocked by the death of a form four student resulting from alleged beating by his seniors in a religious secondary school toilet.

The reason of his beating was solely because he was a top rank student, a good orator and loved by his teachers. Eight of his seniors are now charged with murder while another six were expelled from the religious secondary school for being followers or bystanders in the incident (Azizi & Halimah, n. d.). Hence, it is proven that revelation to the violence through video games will produce students who are not well-balanced and at the same time diverge with the objective of the NPE. The incidents that are latter-mentioned are the examples of aggressive behaviors that have occurred.

Thus, there are big possibilities incidents similar or worsen might occur due to the unlimited exposure to the violence that is promoted. However, this problem still can be restrained through various methods. Parents should play a vital role in controlling their children access to the video games that contain violence. Via this way, the possibilities of them being influenced by the content of the video games will be lesser compared to when they have unlimited access to the console games.

Next, it is the responsibility of teachers in school to educate them that fighting or harming somebody else is not an option except in cases where

self-defense is essential (Azizi & Halimah, n. d.). Conclusion In conclusion, there are a lot of challenges towards making the NPE aspiration a reality in the Malaysian society. The lack of Emotional Intelligence in the Malaysian students due to the examination-based culture that is practiced in Malaysian classroom is one of the challenges in realizing the aspiration. It is a challenge since it only focusing on the intellectual development instead of the emotional expansion.

Secondly, the poverty among Malaysian students is also one of the obstacles since it influences the underprivileged students' academic achievement by the lack of education facilities and the low self concept crisis among them due to their poorness. The final challenge is the problems that occur among the Malaysian students due to the technology advancement. The video game is one of the elements that promotes violence through its content. Hence, the unlimited exposure may lead to various predicaments that put a stop to attain the aspiration of the NPE.