A Self-Government School with the Freedom to Determine their Own Ideal Concept of Liberal School in Sanggar Anak Alam

Francisca Mega Berlian¹, Arif Rohman²

¹Prodi Pendidikan Dasar, Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta
²Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta

¹mgberlian@gmail.com, ²Arif_Rohman@uny.ac.id

Abstract: Everyone has the right to get freedom, even a student in a school. However, education now limits and even does not give any freedom to students. Schools have provided many regulations and many subjects which limit children's freedom. Sanggar Anak Alam is a school which still upholds freedom with responsibility. This research tries to understand the various freedoms given by Sanggar Anak Alam. This research uses the case study of qualitative approach. The data collection technique instruments used are observations, interviews and documentations. The results show that Sanggar Anak Alam provides freedom in learning, freedom of space and freedom from violence. Freedom in learning is the freedom to determine the theme of learning for a semester. Freedom of space is divided into place, time and knowledge. Freedom of place is the freedom to study anywhere, freedom of time is the freedom to study any time, while freedom of knowledge is the freedom to find any learning resource. In addition, the school also gives the students of freedom from violence. Freedom from violence is a sense of being secured and comfort to learn and also to avoid any kind of violence.

Keywords: freedom in learning, freedom of space, freedom from violence

INTRODUCTION

Education has several important roles, enhancing one’s quality of life is one of it. A decent quality of life can be achieved by fully developing one’s own potentiality. One’s good quality of life can also improve the quality of a nation. An ideal education undoubtedly will elevate the quality of the people according to the potentiality of each persons. Education also has the function and role of getting one ready for being fully human and being useful for the other.

Education always rectifies itself as the time comes and go. This can be discerned in the changes of the curriculums. Some of the curriculums that had prevailed in Indonesia is the 1947 curriculum and the 2013 curriculum, one that still prevails hitherto. This latter curriculum has taken into account the aspects of cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric. It is an improvement since generally education only cares about the cognitive one. Even though it’s been better, in practice most of the schools or teachers remain regarding the cognitive ability as the main concern. Affective and psychomotoric aspect that should have been considered more in this curriculum, in fact still regarded as less important. This tenet does not apply to more senior teacher only, there are many young teachers who also cannot ponder all of those three aspects in their process of assessment. This can be understood as it is not an easy task to conduct observation and assessment relating to affective and psychomotoric aspects. Yet, not every student is outstanding in cognitive.

Education always tries to improve itself, and yet there are still some trivial stuffs that eventually end up causing misfortune. For instance, the uniform content of education. Samba
(2007:24) said that education is the manifestation of life. Education is the process of humanizing human. Life will bloom in condition of freedom and liberation for action, including in education. Every individual is different an dunique in their own character, so to say about their capability and hobby. Recent education pertains a single uniform content of study, that unconsciously kills the uniqueness of each person. Another trivial thing is the school time that is too long with the overloaded learning matters. It seems ordinary, but actually the dense schedule and matters cannot guarantee the quality. Quite the opposite, the overtime and overloaded stuffs diminish the students opportunity for developing another ability. Then again, at the time when they get into society, not every single stuff learned will be useful. This is superfluous.

School environment seems too restricted as well. The students are prohibited for leaving school without permission from the teacher or the security staff. This restricted featured school looks unable to blend in with its surrounding. It makes a distance between students and their school surroundings, whereas there are a lot of things can be learned for developing their social and emotional intelligence from it. Thus, there are many things to address concerning our education system. It is important to manage students ability properly for it will end up for the good of the nation and state.

Education should be liberating. Freedom allows student for becoming themself. Freedom allows students to develop their ability thoroughly. Freedom allows student for being creative due to there is no impediment for acting, thinking and behaving. But their freedom must also be able to be accounted responsibly, prudently by the student. Teacher’s role, as facilitator, is to facilitate the students freedom and guide them toward being meaningful and useful.

Nevertheless, it is important to notice that freedom without sense of security at school is vain. Therefore, besides of freedom, being free from any kind of violence at school must be considered highly important too. After the violence vanishes, student will find themself convenient for study, any other kind of freedom such as freedom for learning will be able to be put in practice at the utmost. Sanggar Anak Alam (Salam) is one of the schools that embrace freedom for the kids. Granting the children freedom, Salam hopes to enhance their quality and letting them being fully human.

RESEARCH METHOD

This work is a qualitative research based on cases study. The subjects on this research are students from the first grade to the sixth grade who averaged 15 of Sanggar Anak Alam Elementary School. The data were collected by means of interview and observation. Observation was held on the student learning activity at the school. Whereas interviews were taken by the students of the first grade to the sixth grade, first grade facilitator to the sixth grade facilitator, and the head of Center for Learning Activity of the Society Sanggar Anak Alam. Technique of data reduction, data presentation, and generating conclusion are the data analysis technique applied. As for data validity check, the technique of triangulation and data triangulation are being applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research in Sanggar Anak Alam finds that the school have bestowed upon the students the accountable freedom. That freedom consists of: 1) freedom for learning; 2) freedom of space; 3) freedom from violence. Freedom for learning. This is the freedom for determining the theme of the study held in a semester. Students from the lower grade of first, second, and third still study a uniform kind of lesson for each grade, whilst students from the upper grade are
allowed to study their own themes if they want to. The first grade learn the theme about “Healthy meal”, second grade student about “Taking Care of and Observing the Growth of Oyster”, yet there is a particular student who wants to learn a different theme, “Taking Care of and Observing Fish”. Meanwhile for the third grade, they talk about “Meal Processing of Catfish”. Whereas for the student of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, they are freed for picking their own subject matter. However, the facilitator at the first place actually has selected the general theme, for instance regarding hobby for the fourth class, and then the facilitator let every students to opt their own hobbies to be their lesson, such as football, dancing or cooking.

Freedom of space can be divided into three which are regional space, space of knowledge and temporal space. Regional space refers to the place where the education activity is taking place. It could be anywhere, not confined on school building solely but relative according to what is the subject to be studied, e.g. students are learning about mushroom in the place where mushroom is cultivated. Besides, the school building of Salam is not restricted, no need for fences. It lets the student to keep connected with their surrounding and trains them to be responsible for themself. Freedom of time or temporal space means that there are no restriction concerning when to study. Learning can be done anytime, eventhough Sanggar Anak Alam enacts the regular study time at 8.00 - 1.00 pm on Monday to Friday. That time after all can be compromised on account of collective consent of the class and any other situational considerations. At last, freedom of knowledge means unrestrained space for the children to access knowledge. Students are unrestricted to find any kind of resource for their study, whether it is an interview, book reference or any other kind. School doesn’t decide what is the main book for the primary source of learning. The resource of knowledge is adjusted accordig to the chosen theme. There is also freedom from violence. Sanggar Anak Alam attempts to prevent any sort of violence at school. Any time conflict emerges between students, facilitator will focus on accomodating reconcilitation. The class can even be delayed before the conflict resolved. Facilitator will mediate any kind of conflict.

Freedom is the right of every human being, including school students. Even so, almost all schools are not granting their student freedom apropriately. This phenomenon can be discerned in the fact that every single disciples are taught the same lesson, lack of freedom to express oneself, lack of freedom to explore their surroundings and lack of freedom to develop one’s aptitude. Unfortunately, there are not many people concern about these freedoms. It is due to the lack of critical apprehension toward education system in Indonesia. Most of the people just let everything be done by the authorised institution. Walker (2017:92) sates that granting freedom is a prudent deed. Gradually granting freedom and being unrestrictive will mold the student to get ready for the higher degree of freedom. It is good to be aplied in education, particularly in Indonesia.

Freedom is pivotal in education. Freedom could highly benefit the student development. Specia and Osman (2015: 195) contended that freedom in education could lead to a teaching of performatif act that permit changes, inventions, spontaneous drifts and even be the catalyst to derive any unique stuff in class. That’s what Salam does. The study activity in Salam is conducted by means of research on a particular theme for every single semester. The purpose is letting the students to produce their own knowledge and initiating change in the education sphere in general. Freedom bestows challenge upon students so that the students are intrigued for stipulating act and bringing about their ability. Sanggar Anak Alam, as an alternative education in Yogyakarta, grants student several kind of freedoms. Those are freedom to learn, freedom of space and freedom from violence.
Freedom to Learn

Education in Indonesia has a highly homogeneous lesson. Every level of education and every grade have their own settled content of study. This is very different to Salam where the subject of study in a semester is being selected and consented by both the students and the facilitator. In formal education, every time a student cannot cope with a lesson, he or she will be deemed as failed and has to stay on their recent grade for another year. Whilst in Salam, every student will always get through the upper grade. Any kind of failure will be evaluated though. Salam will never overload students on learning because they know pretty well that cognitive competency is not the only thing to consider, the affective and psycomotoric have to be cultivated as well. When schools overload student on the cognitive basis, actually they are doing an intellectual violence.

Candra and colleagues (2016: 103) described intellectual violence as a violence that is engendered from the high amount of lesson, homework, exam, and many more tests that become the burden for the elementary kids. This violence is apparent particularly in formal schools. Moreover, Chu-diel (2010: 35) stated that education system in Indonesia is bizzare due to the highly load of intellectual burden. It makes students heed only on their school activity and thus diminish their opportunity for developing another kind of ability. The intellectual burden and the demand for comprehending it is usually being proven by scores, and thus it frequently drives students toward cheating. It means that students get accustomed to commit wrongdoing for achieving a decent score. In consequence, the act of cheating is common in Indonesia.

Freedom for learning in Salam begins by selecting activity that the students are fond of. Their hobbies and interests are vary, some of them fancy math, some other like sport, and another one loves art, cooking, etc. Every children should be invited to think about what kind of conduct that suits their interest best. Respecting that education process is a long journey, each semesters could introduce a new theme to learn or just carry on the theme from the last semester. In every semester, a student can apprehend a broader range of theme or perhaps deepen his or her understanding on the previous subject, yet with a different goal. By their self-chosen conduct based on their own interest, the students can conceive more lucidly stuffs regarding their interest, and on the other hand the teachers could relate it to some other useful subject more easily. Interest and hobby chosen can be proposed as the theme for research study. It means that student not only learn it, but learn it and examine in more profoundly. This aims at leading the student to a deeper understanding of the subject, not merely a superficial one.

Walker (2017: 103) said that teacher’s task is bridging the interest of the students with the prevailing curriculum, discussing the interests of the students must always be priority in the class. Likewise teachers occupy the role as facilitator to facilitate the student’s interests. For this reason, the amount of pupil in a class should be considered wisely. It is better that with a class consists of fifteen students, at least there are a couple of facilitators. It attempts to warrant that the cultivation of their interest and their ability can be done thoroughly.

After determining the activity to be taken in the form of research, the next step is to determine the target of achievement and its indicator. It ensures that the learning process is oriented with an objectives. Walker (2017: 106) suggested the importance of devising study plan with the students. Thus after determining the target and orientation of the study, what to do next is creating a study plan with the students. Usually, people regard planning as the responsibility of the teacher and school. While the person undertaking it is the student, isn’t it weird? Study plan is for the student and therefore the act of planning must also be undertaken
with the student. The daily activities are there on the study plan as well. The planning attempts
to guarantee that the study program would run effectively.

**Freedom of Space**

Freedom of space granted by Sanggar Anak Alam is kind of space as learning place, space as
learning time and space for seeking study resource. Space regarding place can be seen in every
school building, most of them are restricted by tall fences and walls, and also security staff. This
set of place compels the students to heed only upon what’s going on within the wall. There is a
rigid rule as well for inhibiting the students leave of the school without permission from the
teacher. It contrasts to Sanggar Anak Alam. This school has no fence at all. Some part of the
building is constructed by such kind of bamboo plait so that someone from within can still peek
outside. There is no rigid surveillance also. Salam students are used to consent for generating
school activity, including consent bear on spatial boundary while committing study. Although
there is no physical boundary, the consensus between students and facilitators in fact could
engender non-physical confinement. If there is a student wandering during the class, another kid
has the right to warn him or her.

Many people assume that closed building would assist students to concentrate, but actually if
children stay in a closed room for too long, they can get distressed due to the inability to find
any kind of amusement during the class. All they can perceive only walls, board, desks, chairs,
and their counterparts that are also compelled to be focus all the time.

Closed room hinders the air to get within despite the fact that fresh air is necessay during the
learning process. Walker (2017: 38) explained that fresh air is able to drive the brain to work
better. Cheryan, Ziegler, Plaut and Meltzoff (2014: 10) stated that it’s been scientifically proven
that environment is highly influential for learning and achievement. Therefore, classroom
setting as the space where the learning process is taking place has to ponder on air flow. High
quality air will help student’s brain to do better.

Air supply is not the only thing to be concerned about. Closed classroom also impede the
creativity of the student. What can a kid fancy by staring at the wall? It thwarts imagination.
Allen, MacNaughton, Satish, Santanam, Vallarino and Spengler (2016: 812) found that any
other indoor setting, such as house, school, plane cabin, could lessen cognitive function and
desicion making ability. Hence, it significantly affects productivity, learning development, and
awareness. For that reason, it is better for learning process not only be done in the classroom but
also outside of it.

Learning with spati

Learning process highly depends upon what is written on the book. Teachers do not encourage their
student to seek any other source of knowledge besides that book. Hence the students are not seeking for them. Sanggar Anak Alam is different. In Salam, there is no such kind of handbook to be the sole reference of knowledge. Resources are adjusted according to the themes. Those resources might not be books either. They could be an interview or digital sources.

Seeking knowledge nowadays is indispensable from harnessing technology. Technology opens an unlimited world and allows children to be free. Nevertheless, technology usage by kids also have to be monitored due to the negative influence it might endanger as well. Candra and colleagues (2016: 161) stated that school should be the pioneer of harnessing technology in support for education. The danger it could engender have to be concern too. Technology can be useful for providing knowledge reference, but also could cause harm.

Eke and Sing (2018: 2) said that information technology, such as internet, does not cost much and it is easy to utilize and hence to be accessed. This accessibility allows the student to get references needed easily. Dhamayanti (2017: 13) contended that information technology is not merely a medium for harnessing information, interaction or even spreading it. Information technology is moreover a medium for creating culture. This medium unites societies and begets a sense of belonging. Thus, information technology is indispensable for education.

Another alternative to access knowledge resource is library. Besides school library, occasionally, there are local library or city library likewise. Adams (2015: 72) argued that granting intellectual freedom for the librarian could advance the quality of education and the students. It shows that the role of library to provide knowledge resource is prominent. Visiting library enables students to find plenty resources of knowledge for themselves and so less dependent upon their teachers.

Space of knowledge is not merely about books or information technology. Interview is another source of knowledge. By this, teacher is no longer the primary source of learning, regarding his or her knowledge is limited either. Teacher’s main role as facilitator is assisting the students to find the appropriate resources. One of that resources is several particular persons to be interviewed. The best study resource on sewing, for example, is tailors. The best learning source on cooking is chefs or cooks.

Temporal space, on the other hand, in this occasion means that kids may learn anytime, not restricted to the regular time of 8.00 am – 1.00 pm on Monday to Friday. The learning process in Sanggar Anak Alam doesn’t only involve students and teachers, but parents involvement is also necessary. Learning anytime doesn’t mean that kids have to study all day long, but it means that the time for study is flexible, could be with the aid of facilitators or the parents, could be at school or at home. Later after study process, some kind of leisure time or relief time is necessary too. Candra and colleagues (2016: 57) proposed a particular means for being relieved at school in only fifteen minutes. That fifteen minutes is the time for relax and silence. That fifteen minutes is the time for doing nothing and relinquishing the mind from any daily activity. Akdeniz (2018: 88) has shown that relaxation could be helpful for improving health and concentration of kids on their learning process, and could improve and develop their skills further.

Relaxation could be done anywhere, not just at school. Still, it is good for the teacher to employ such kind of relaxation for the students in respect of the immense benefit it could engender. Fitriani and Alsa (2015: 152) stated that autogenic relaxation is able to soothe blood pressure that had been tense due to school activity. Autogenic relaxation refers to something within oneself that is generated by oneself. Its aim is to develop a connection between verbal sign and a relax body which do nothing of physical activity. It presumably prompts a feeling of calm, ease and warm, and so gets one ready for learning much more.
Freedom from Violence

Undeniably, there are a lot of violence cases at school nowadays. Mostly the victims are students. Any kind of freedom mentioned above cannot be carried out properly if kids cannot feel certain at school because there are violences. Sense of security must be the primary concern for every kind of school activity. Sense of security more or less can warrant that learning process can work at the utmost. On the contrary, without sense of security, it can be understood that some students resist to go to school.

Violence againsts children can be defined in various way. Cetin and Ozozen (2016: 73) defined violence againsts children as any sort of deliberate conduct toward another individual that causes physical and psychological damage and inhibits the development of affective, cognitive, moral and social ability. Pur, Liman and Ali (2016: 112) added that kind of violence with the most catastrophic outcome is the kind of phychological or mental one. It can be discerned in the act of scolding, insulting, or simply teasing.

Radja, Kaunang, Dundu and Munayang (2016: 2) described several examples of consequences following violence regarding growth and development impediment upon kids. Physical abuse might end up causing severe damage on neural system or causing apparent wound, broken bone, or even casualty. On the other hand, mental or psychological abuse might distress mental health and induces feelings such as anxiety, depression, etc. It isn’t impossible that the development of IQ and cognitive capacity would be hindered as well.

Sanggar Anak Alam concerns a lot about new student. Any time there is a new student, the facilitators would invite the old students to get closer and grat them the responsibility for taking care their new friend. This conduct is implemented based on the concept of buddy. The application of this concepts appears to be helpful for encouraging friendship between them. Candra and colleagues (2016: 65) defined buddy simply as friend. Implementig the concept of buddy means matching students in pair. It creates a bond of friendship. It could avoid any kind of violence that abuses the new student due to they are perceived as weak by their older counterpart. The concept of buddy enforces the old students to become viligantes for their juniors. The old student, as a buddy, has a responsibility for protecting his or her junior that has been matched by the teacher. Moreover, the buddy has the duty to empower his or her junior interacting with the others and reassure the junior if it is necessary. A research conducted by Griffin and his colleagues (2017: 35) found that practice of buddy at school diminishes social alienation upon new students, instead encourages the new students to involve more in social interaction during downtime.

Storytelling can be another means for exterminating violence at school. Tales are very common in the life of a kid. Most of the children love tales and will be happy to have tales told for them. This could be a highly effective medium for inducing and teaching positive stuffs upon the children such as on peaceful and non-violence life. Agustini (2015: 27) said that learning by means of storytelling is a prudent choice. Tales interest the kids. The messages within such tales are not conveyed forcefully. Kids are invited to think about the meaning of a tale in their own perspectives. For this reason, teacher has to opt a tale with a noble value and thus the children could acquire a virtuous understanding. Tales suit more for the students of the first, second and third grade regarding they are still fond of fictional story. Whereas for the upper grade students, actual stories could be more appealing for them to think about and discuss it further. Those stories can be derived from the occurrence within the school or outside of it, or even the experience of the facilitator and teacher.
Violence occasionally conducted by the student toward another student. This might be because of the inability to manage their emotion. One thing that could be employed when a student being resentful is to steer his or her toward another activity, painting or writing for instances. Having time to be alone is another way to cope with anger. Another fashion to get deal with emotion is providing what is called by creativity corner. Candra and colleagues (2016: 133) explained creativity corner as a place where kids are permitted to express whatever they want. By doing this, hopefully their aggressive tendency would subside and therefore repress the possibility of committing violence. Hedegaard (2016: 60) stated that teachers have to be able to manage the kids temper and guide them to do a more positive deed, such as working on creativity corner.

CONCLUSIONS

Sanggar Anak Alam makes innovations in the organization of Education. The innovation provided gives freedom to each student. Freedom is an important part of every child's life. Freedom makes students more active and creative. The freedom given by Sanggar Anak Alam is transformed into freedom of learning, freedom of space and freedom from freedom. This form of freedom cannot indeed be applied to all official schools because there are rules that bind schools. However, for alternative education specifically for non-formal education, there are not too many rules for an innovation model. Education like this is very good to do.

REFERENCES

Adams, H. R. (2015). Have intellectual freedom and privacy questions? Help is on the way!. Knowledge Quest, 43(4), 72. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?q=freedom+in+education&id=EJ1063981

Akdeniz, Hakan. (2018). Levels of satisfaction with leisure time in foreign students. Journal of Education and Training Studies, 6(3), 88-97. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?q=relaxation&ff1=dtySince_2014&pg=2&id=EJ1175568

Allen, J. G., MacNaughton, P., Satish, U., Santanam, S., Vallarino, J., & Spengler, J. D. (2016). Associations of cognitive function scores white carbon dioxide, ventilation, and volatile organic compound exposures in office workers: A controlled exposure study of green and conventional office environments. Environmental Health Perspectives, 124(6), 805-812.

Candra, Novi Poespita, dkk. (2016). Sekolah Nir Kekerasan: Inspirasi Sekolah Menyenangkan dari Empat Benua. Yogyakarta: IfadaPress

Cetin, Z., & Ozoren Danaci, M. (2016). A multivariate examination of the child-abuse potential of parents with children aged 0-6. Eurasian journal of educational research, 16(66), 1-30. Retrieved From https://eric.ed.gov/?q=child+abuse&ff1=dtySince_2014&id=EJ1149020

Chawla, L. (2015). Benefits of nature contact for children. Journal of Planning Literature, 30(4), 433-452.

Cheryan, S., Ziegler, S. A., Plaut, V. C., & Meltzoff, A. N. (2014). Designing classrooms to maximize student achievement. Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 1(1), 4-12.

Chu-Diel. (2010). Sekolah dibubarkan saja!. Yogyakarta: INSISTPress.

Dhamayanti, M. (2017). Bijak penggunaan sosial media sebagai upaya antisipasi kekerasan seksual terhadap anak. PROSIDING KOMUNIKASI, 1(2), 12-16. Retrieved From
Eke, C. I., & Singh, S. (2018). Social networking as a strategic tool in the management of school-based violence. South African Journal of Education, 38(1), 1-8. Retrieved From https://eric.ed.gov/?q=use+of+technology+to+reduce+violence&id=EJ1173203

Fitriani, Y., & Alsa, A. (2015). Relaksasi autogenik untuk meningkatkan regulasi emosi pada siswa SMP. Gadjah Mada Journal of Professional Psychology, 1(3), 149-162. Retrieved From https://journal.ugm.ac.id/gamajpp/article/view/9391/6965

Griffin Jr, A. A., Caldarella, P., Sabey, C. V., & Heath, M. A. (2017). The effects of a buddy bench on elementary students' solitary behavior during recess. International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 10(1), 27-36. Retrieved From https://eric.ed.gov/?q=buddy&ff1=dtySince_2014&id=EJ1156319

Hedegaard, M. (2016). Imagination and emotion in children's play: a cultural-historical approach. International Research in Early Childhood Education, 7(2), 59-74. Retrieved https://eric.ed.gov/?q=diverting+the+child%27s+emotions&ff1=dtySince_2014&pg=4&id=EJ1138863

Pur, H. J., Liman, M. A., & Ali, D. G. (2016). Students' perception of causes and effect of teachers' psychological abuse in senior secondary schools in borno state, nigeria. Journal of Education and Practice, 7(29), 111-119. Retrieved From https://eric.ed.gov/?q=child+abuse+in+education&id=EJ1118806

Radja, R. D., Kaunang, T. M., Dundu, A. E., & Munayang, H. (2016). Gambaran kekerasan pada anak sekolah dasar di Kecamatan Malalayang Kota Manado. e-CliniC, 4(2), 1-6. Retrieved From https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/index.php/eclinic/article/view/14598/14166

Samba, Samba. (2007). LebihBaikTidakSekolah. Yogyakarta: PT. LkiSPelangiAksara

Specia, A., & Osman, A. A. (2015). Education as a Practice of Freedom: Reflections on bell hooks. Journal of Education and Practice, 6(17), 195-199. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1079754.pdf

Walker, Timothy D. 2017. Teach Like Finlandia. Jakarta: Gramedia

Eliçin, Ö., & Kaya, A. (2017). Determining Studies Conducted upon Individuals with Autism Eliçin, Ö., & Kaya, A. (2017). Determining Studies Conducted upon Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder Using High-Tech Devices. Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 17(1), 27-45. DOI 10.12738/estp.2017.1.0236