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Application of Q & A Technique in Learning for Students Development

ABSTRACT: There are various teaching methods can be used in accordance with the learning objectives. The Question and Answer (Q & A) aims to continuously encourage students to think and stay focused during the learning session. The Q & A's activities are indeed beneficial for students. However, special attention should be given on the planning and implementation of the session for the optimum benefits. Questions and answers session can be one of the classroom teaching techniques to enhance student confidence and their development. To this date, excellent students are no longer assessed on their academic development. Student development should be seen in terms of academic and personal development (personal qualities and leadership). Personal development is very important in producing students who are disciplined, having creative and critical thinking with the ability to communicate, and skilled in planning and decision making. Thus, this article discusses the planning and implementation of the Q & A as one of the teaching techniques in enhancing development of students.

KEY WORD: Question and answer, students, teaching method, development, personality, and training.

IKHTISAR: Terdapat pelbagai kaedah pengajaran yang boleh digunakan agar selari dengan pencapaian objektif pembelajaran. Soal jawab bertujuan untuk menggalakkan pelajar berfikir dan sentiasa fokus ketika sesi pembelajaran berlangsung. Banyak manfaat dapat diperolehi oleh pelajar daripada aktiviti soal jawab ini. Walau bagaimanapun, perancangan dan pelaksanaan soal jawab perlu dititikberatkan bagi mendapat manfaat yang optimum. Soal jawab boleh dijadikan salah satu teknik pengajaran di dalam kelas bagi meningkatkan keyakinan pelajar dan juga pembangunan pelajar. Kecemerlangan pelajar abad ini tidak hanya tertumpu kepada pembangunan akademik sahaja. Pembangunan pelajar perlu dilihat dari segi akademik dan juga sahsiah (kualiti diri dan kepimpinan). Pembangunan sahsiah amat penting dalam melahirkan pelajar yang berdisiplin, berfikir kreatif dan kritis dengan berkemahiran dalam berkomunikasi, dan berkemahiran merancang dan membuat keputusan. Justeru, artikel ini mengupas perancangan dan pelaksanaan kaedah soal jawab sebagai salah satu teknik pengajaran dengan tujuan untuk meningkatkan pembangunan pelajar.

KATA KUNCI: Soal jawab, pelajar, teknik pengajaran, pembangunan, sahsiah, dan latihan.

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INTRODUCTION

Presently, excellent students are no longer viewed based on academic achievements. Excellence should be measured based on the quality of self, particularly on how the student presents themselves as future leaders. On the other hand, excellence in the academic and personality aspects should be parts of student leadership qualities. Character or personality excellent needs to be addressed to enable them managing their own intelligence. Students, who are excellent and well-balanced in intellect and character, will become dynamic and integrated future leaders. Individual integrity is a consistency in what is said by the individual with what is done; consistent in actions with moral principles, ethics, and law; and concordance between self-interest with the public interest.

Student development is a shared responsibility between schools, universities, lecturers, family, community, and students themselves (Cabrera *et al.*, 2002). Thus, as an instructor, selection of techniques or methods for training / teaching is seen as one of the ways to enhance the development of students. There are various teaching techniques or methods can be used in accordance with the learning objectives. Careful and appropriate selection of teaching techniques would enhance the effectiveness of learning (Lepper & Cordova, 1992; Charles & Brian, 1996; and Wehrli & Nyquist, 2003).

Q & A (Question and Answer) is seen as one of the techniques that can be applied in the classroom. However, it depends on careful planning and implementation of activities to ensure it is done effectively. In terms of educational objectives based on the level of Bloom's Taxonomy (1956), in planning learning objectives, instructors can no longer focus on the lower levels of knowledge and understanding. Multiple levels of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation should be translated into classroom activities to optimize the achievement of students' personality performance.

Thus, this causes the existence of social domain which focuses on the aspects of management, teamwork, communication, and leadership. Social domain is essential in conducting classroom activities, as it is geared towards the development of students. Hence, this article assesses training or teaching technique/method that is seen to contribute towards the progress of students. This article discusses also the planning and executing of common questions and answers session as it should be carried out.

THE CONCEPT OF Q & A

Question and Answer (Q & A) session involving a coach or instructor to ask questions, as the audience or students to provide the answers. An audience can only be considered as having active thinking, when the audience is involved either by listening or answering questions. Question and Answer session can be used at any time, that is when the instructor is engaging the audience as well as to encourage active thinking and participation. Q & A can also be used when introducing a new topic (David, 2005).

Due to the advancement of technology, students are actually exposed to a variety of experiences and information. Thus, Q & A session is another beneficial method in sharing experience and information with students. Q & A could be applied in several ways, between teacher-student and also among students. This session will run smoothly when teachers give assignments in advance to a group of students, for a presentation at the next meeting. Another groups of students who are not presenting need to ask questions and student/group presentations should provide a thoughtful and creative answers.

THE IMPORTANCE OF Q & A

According to O.G. Kenneth (2010), the Question and Answer (Q & A) session has several advantages, among others:

First, to promote communication and maintain interest on certain topic. Usage of appropriate Q & A method will help in regulating communication and retaining listeners' interest on a particular topic.

Second, to ensure understanding. In addition to encouraging participation, Q & A is another teaching approach which encourages feedback. When questions are asked and answered, the instructor can determine whether people have understood what has been taught and whether the message has been properly applied.

Third, to direct students' attention. The human mind has the tendency to explore unknown things and is always curious about something strange or new. Therefore, with questions and answers, they will always lead students' attention towards the learning content. This is because students have to stay alert when they realize that they are required to respond, then, the focus of attention of every student and the whole class will always be stimulated.

Fourth, to help students to draw conclusions. Q & A can be used to help students in drilling, reviewing, and making conclusions. It will strengthen students' understanding and maintaining their memory.

Fifth, to provoke experience and be an additional motivation. Q & A session stimulates students to think that they are in their class rather than in another class. Self-awareness with the help of teaching-learning experience may become extra motivation in improving student learning.

QUESTIONING STYLES

According to J.M. David (2005), there are three questioning styles. *First, Overall / Spread (Overhead Literally).* Trainers / instructors post questions to all members of the group. The group leader can be the first one to answer and this is a great way to start the training session. Individuals who have had an answer can also be selected to be the first to answer. Individuals who do not respond may be encouraged with further questions.

Second, Overall and Selection (Overhead and Nominated). Question is firstly posed to the entire group, the students are given some time to think, and then someone is selected to answer. When certain period of time is provided, everyone has a chance to think of the answer. In this way, all students will be able to engage in a question and answer session.

Third, Selection (Nominated). Identify the individual / student to be asked before giving the questions. The weakness of this technique is that once a person's name is called, the other participants may stop paying attention because they know they will not be called to give an answer. However, this kind of questioning technique can be used if there are individuals who have the experience and specific knowledge about the topic or matter to be discussed or shared with others.

There are various means can be used to ensure active participation of the students. Therefore, students who failed to respond can be asked again using a simpler question, so that they can give an answer. In addition, to encourage active participation of students, instructors should avoid giving too many opportunities to good students.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

According to J.M. David (2005), there are also several types of questions. *First, Closed questions.* Closed questions are questions that need either an answer of "yes" or "no". Questions of this type can be used when starting a new topic or to be posted to a group of students on the first meeting.

Second, Open-ended questions/divergent. Open-ended questions are questions which provide an opportunity or freedom for the students to give a variety of answers. For example: "Can you tell the reasons ... ?" or

“Can you explain about ... ?”. The key words commonly used to ask open-ended questions are like “what”, “when”, “where”, “why” or “which”.

Third, Guided questions. Guided questions lead students to the desired answer. For example: “Actually, what we need to do is ...” or “Is it true?”. These questions do not provide ample time for students to think.

Fourth, Reflective questions. Questions such as these relate with the past. For example: “Just now I was informed that ... can you please clarify the matter ...?”.

Fifth, Prompting questions. This type of questions encourages students to continue talking and providing more answers. For example: “And then what happened?” or “What is next ...?”.

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE Q & A

According to O.G. Kenneth (2010), it is better to plan the Question and Answer technique prior of the lesson. Instructors should determine the issues to be questioned in the class and identify appropriate approaches to check, introduce new materials, or to test students’ understanding of the lesson presented.

Sometimes there are questions which do not relate to the subject but able to stimulate students’ interest and motivation. Instructors are the decision maker, and such the instructor must be able to decide whether this kind of questions can be forwarded to the overall benefit of the class, even though it is not directly related to the lesson being taught.

In addition, the instructor can only ask the students on things that can be understood by them alone. The purpose of this technique is not to highlight instructors’ knowledge or to reveal students in-capabilities. If a question is not understood by the students, it must be repeated in other verbal forms until it is fully understood.

Instructors’ response towards questions posed by students is also important. Instructors must acknowledge and respect each question from students, as long as it is not disrupting the overall learning and teaching process. In addition, each question or answer from student needs to be respected.

The use of a highly effective Q & A (Question and Answer) is indeed related to the comprehensive knowledge on the subject matter and it requires detailed planning. Instructors, who really want to engage students using this way, need to write the questions in advance. The questions, then, need to be tested on the significance and their relevance before the actual learning process. This is better rather than asking about everything that comes to their minds during the lesson.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF Q & A METHODS

As in other teaching techniques, there are strengths and weaknesses or advantages and disadvantages to be considered. And such, using the Q & A (Question and Answer) as a teaching method has certain strengths and weaknesses as shown in table 1.

However, it depends on the objectives of the session. It is better for the instructors to inform the students regarding the benefits of answering questions, as it is not to determine who is good or who is not. Its weaknesses as shown in table 1 would be easily eliminated, if students understand the objective of the Q & A session in class or understand that it is a form of teaching and learning.

Table 1:
The Strengths and Weaknesses of Q & A Method

Strengths	Weaknesses
Trainees will be more sensitive/focus to the content of the discussion if there is a Q & A session.	If trainees are passive, the objectives would not be implemented successfully.
The training sessions or classes will become a two-way process.	If the Q & A session is not carried out correctly, there is a risk to reveal trainer's in-capabilities.
If Q & A session is carried out effectively, it can serve as a teaching method to attract trainees at the beginning of the lesson or at the end of class when drawing conclusions.	If the instructor is not ready and not highly skilled, the questions posed by the instructor may not be answered in full.
A successful Q & A session will stimulate trainees to be active and class will not be boring.	There is a possibility of too sensitive students in the class, whom would be discouraged, if the instructor responds sarcastically when asked by the students.

If the Q & A session is used as part of the students' assignments and scored by the instructor, then its potential to develop students' character may be achieved. A group of students are selected and given a certain period of time to plan and presenting, whereas the other students need to prepare some questions to be asked to either the instructor or the students after the presentation.

All students have to go through the same process, in which some students ask questions and there are other students who need to answer the questions. Instructor acts as a facilitator to regulate the Q & A session, particularly when there is tension and inaccurate answers or when the

students are unable to answer certain questions. At the same time, the instructor is free to question any student/group and likewise, students are free to ask the instructor.

CONCLUSION

The quality of a student depends on the quality of his/her character and integrity as a student. Students today are future generation who will form our future nation. Students are human capital or assets that need to be preserved and need value added of quality as they are bridging in the current generation of leaders. The shape of the future, country depends on the development of current human resources.

There are various ways to be carried out in the hope to develop students. Instructors, especially in higher learning institutions, can also contribute to design appropriate teaching techniques to develop students' character and their academic achievement.

Q & A (Question and Answer) is seen as one of the methods or training / teaching techniques compatibly used in conducting the class or classes for this purpose. In conducting an effective Q & A method, requires a detailed lesson plan. Instructors as well as students should be ready and well-prepared with questions. It is equally important for the instructor to be fully ready with appropriate response to a question posed by the students. Instructors need to acknowledge and respect each question from students. A careful planning and proper implementation of the Q & A session will result effective classroom learning and in turn will produce better students.

This similarly applies to the aspect of Q & A session carried out among students. Instructors need to train students to be good listeners and focus on their friends' presentation. This is to help the students in formulating brilliant questions and questions of various levels of cognitive domain. Meanwhile, the other students, who are supposed to answer the question, need to be alert, focus, and listen attentively to the questions posed either by the instructor or by the students in the class.

Thus, it depends on each individual in the learning session to well play their roles. Undoubtedly, it is possible for learning through Q & A technique to produce students who are focused, creative, courageous, good listeners, diligent, responsible, and having high quality of characters and leadership.

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