***Developing Music as a Medium for Character Building in Indonesia, Comparing Eastern and Western Approaches***

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This paper reports on a study Developing a Model for Teaching & Learning Music in Public Schools Based on Comparative Study between Indonesia and the Netherlands 2010. One objective of the study was to develop a model for learning music as a medium for character building. Data collection used observation (from elementary schools to universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and Utrecht, Netherlands), interview (experts, stakeholders, teachers, students), and library research. The study showed that, in the Western world, character building places an important emphasis on improving critical thinking, objectivity, and democracy, and is often not related to religion. By contrast, in the Eastern world, character building emphasises obedience to rules, acceptance of norms, and, in Indonesia, is nearly always related to religion. Drawing on the strengths of both models, a music teaching and learning model has been developed as a medium for character building in Indonesia based on: 1) constructivist theory; 2) students-centred learning; 3) thematic learning integrating theory-practice; 4) contextual learning; and 5) self-awareness.

1. **Background**

Moral has always been a major issue since the establishment of a nation. The state is responsible for the compliance of norms and rules of law by its supporting community. How strongly the norms and laws are adhered by the people will depend on moral consciousness of the society. Therefore, the establishing moral values is a fundamental need for a nation.

Education is the spearhead in establishing the nation's morals or character. What kind of character that will be established by the nation can be manifested through education. Thus, education not only enhances the human qualities in terms of intelligence, but also in terms of behavior.

Character education can be done through either formal, non-formal, or informal education. The strategy used in character education can be directly through the behavior-related subjects, such as religion and manner education, or indirectly, i.e. through the knowledge-related subjects such as science, social, arts, and so forth.

In learning arts there are broadly three stages, namely the appreciation, creation, and expression of arts. Appreciation is the awareness to appreciate works of art by recognizing the various kinds of art. Creation is an activity to create art works, while expression is an activity to reveal the works of art with certain techniques. (Astuti, 2009) Thus, if associated with the classification of learning outcomes by Bloom, Gagne, Simpson, and Krathwohl, basically learning arts involves the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains. The ability of intelligent thinking and a deep appreciation to the natural and social phenomena will produce quality art works. These art works can be actualized perfectly if supported by good skills.

The power of art as a medium for moral or character building lies in the values it contains. As a medium for expressing feelings, art contains the values of honesty and openness. A qualified art work constitutes a reflection deep appreciation towards the realities of life. Therefore, creating a work of art cannot be separated from the attitude of sympathy and empathy which is a form of caring and attention.

In the field of art music such values can be explicit like those seen in the lyrics of songs, and can also be implicit as in the meaning contained therein. ( Dewantara, 1977)The wording of a lyric has the power of influencing opinions, attitudes, and behavior(Kushartanti, 2004). The values of character education that are established through the lyric of a song depend on the theme of the song. Therefore, through different songs, various values of character can be formed, ranging from the aspects of spiritual, compassion, tolerance, love, up to the sense of caring for the environment.

Expression of feelings through songs is sometimes presented using figurative language which makes the intention disguised. This kind song lyric may invite a very broad interpretation, depending on the person's understanding. Whether consciously or not, the values contained in the meaning and interpretation will be pervasive in the thinking, attitudes, and behavior.

The values of character education can also indirectly be developed through the process of art . The process of art requires a continuous exercise to achieve a certain skill level. The values contained in the training process are, among others, discipline, perseverance, and hard work.

More comprehensively it can be explained that, viewed from the aspects of appreciation, creativity, and expression, the values which can be developed through the art of music are, among others, compassion, empathy, responsibility, cooperation, discipline, visionary, justice, openness, and perseverance. In fact, through a complex religious art music, religious values can be also developed, i.e. through the lyric of the songs that can increase religious piety and faith (Astuti, Dies UNY, 2011).

1. **Discussion**
2. **The Comparison of Values of Western and Eastern Character Education**

Every human being born in the world has been provided with certain good values that exist in his or her conscience. Those values lead the human to find a good way of life. Those values include love to honesty, openness, compassion, love of peace, mutual help, and so forth. It shows that God has equipped every human being with the same values. Violating any of those values violated will lead to restless and uneasy feeling because it is against anybody’s conscience.

Those values are indeed universal values that can unite the nations of the world. However, every nation has different geographic condition, natural resources, and historical background, so that their cultures also vary.

For example, in Western music the beat is played with a steady and regular tempo, while in a gamelan music sometimes the knock-knock (beat) is somewhat postponed, following the player’s feeling. Apart from that, in Western music there are rule of harmonization which are set based on logic, while in gamelan music the composed harmonization is designed more based on feelings and creativity.

Based on the discussion above, we may conclude that basically every human being has been equipped with the nature of good virtues as the guide of life. However, differences in the background of geography, history, environment, experience, culture and so forth make these universal values actualized differently. Consequently, art music which functions as a medium of education in the learning process was also developed differently.

Every country has different geographical condition, resources, and historical background, so each country has various cultures. People in countries with four seasons generally have harder –working attitude because in a certain season, for example in winter, they cannot do activities and get natural resources as freely as in other seasons. People in countries with limited natural resources generally have good capabilities in technology, service, processing, and so on. People in countries that experienced to be colonized, in general, have less bravery in freedom to express opinion, but they have much higher social cohesion. (astuti,2009)

The factors mentioned above make each nation have different cultures. In general, western countries are considered more open, expressive, frank, and rational than eastern countries. In Eastern countries people are considered more closed, and there are many rules that cannot be explained rationally. Viewed from the way how people inherit their knowledge and cultures, western people has written cultures, while eastern people have oral cultures. The different learning style also influences the product of arts and cultures. Western art development tends to develop cognitive aspects while eastern cultures tend to focus on affective aspects.(Astuti, seminar FBS). For example, in Western music the beat is played with a steady and regular tempo, while in a gamelan music sometimes the knock-knock (beat) is somewhat postponed, following the player’s feeling. Apart from that, in Western music there are rule of harmonization which are set based on logic, while in gamelan music the composed harmonization is designed more based on feelings and creativity.

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1. **Metodologi Research**

This research was conducted in Indonesia and in Netherlands. Data in Indonesia were obtained from observation, interview, discussion, and library research. The secondary data were obtained from the previous research about music education model in elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, and in a university that trains music teacher to be in Yogyakarta. Data in the Netherlands were obtained from observation in primary schools (Peuterspeelzaal/Kinderdagverblijf and Basisschool in Utrecht), secondary schools (Voortgezet Middelbaar onderwijs Hoger and Hogergeset Middelbaar onderwijs in), and in college level in Hogeschool van de Kunsten Utrecht. The Hoogeschool van de Kunsten is an institution that trains music teachers to be.

In Indonesia, the interview was given to music teachers, students of elementary and junior and senior high schools, as well as to university students. In the Netherland the interview was conducted with lecturers and teachers of music as well as with students. Lecturers who were interviewed were from Hogeschool Kunsten Utrecht. They taught pedagogy, vocal, chorus, and drama. Teachers who were interviewed were from Dacosta Hogeveen Utrecht and from schools in Zeist as well as music teachers from Calls College 16 Nieuwegein. This research also involved a lecturer from Utrecht University

Data from library research were obtained from references about music teaching and learning models, educational system, curriculum, learning materials, theories, approaches, methods, media, strategy, and evaluation of learning music both in Indonesia and the Netherlands.

1. **The Result of the Research**
2. **The Development of Character Education in the Netherlands**

The results show that viewed from the aspects of character education there are some differences in the development of character education values between the Netherlands and Indonesia. In Netherlands character building places an important emphasis on obedience to rules and discipline in public life, improving critical thinking, objectivity, democracy, and is rarely related to religion.

Obedience to the rules and discipline is established in integrative manner starting from the family, community, and school since an early age. The focus of learning in the elementary education, i.e. Carpenter Speelzaal / Kinderdagverblijf (2.5 to 4 years old) and Basis School (4-12 years old) is not only in subject matter, but also in terms of establishing discipline to the children such as cleanliness and neatness.

Based on observations conducted at Hogeven Dacosta, it is found that, in teaching the art of music for the low grade (age 4-7 years), music is used to instill the values of discipline, cooperation, respect for others, and self-confidence.

One way to instill the values of discipline is that the teacher organized students to take the musical instrument they choose one by one in a queue. This way will indirectly teach the students to learn how to take a decision, i.e. when choosing the instrument that they will play. On the other hand, the students who have not had their turn will learn to be patient and sincerely accept if the musical instrument he/she likes has been taken by the other student who has their turn first.

Discipline is also taught while singing the songs and playing the musical instrument at the same time. First of all, the teacher asked the students to sing a familiar song together. After one round of the song was finished, students were told to play their musical instruments (percussion) as much as they like. After considering it enough, the teacher asked them to stop. If there was a student who played their instruments not in accordance to the instruction, the teacher would reprovingly ask him/her to stop.

The value of cooperation is also cultivated through music. For example, after the students sang the songs that they know well together, sometimes, they continued by singing happy birthday songs in different languages to a student who was having a birthday. The event of blowing out the candles was carried out jointly by the whole class because the student who was having his birthday failed to blow out the candles perfectly by himself.

Singing songs in various languages will indirectly teach the students about multiculturalism. The children are taught about the variety of race and ethnicity. This makes the Dutch as a multicultural nation. This experience constitutes a mirror reflecting multiculturalism in the Netherlands. Multiculturalism is also illustrated in the life of Dutch society (but not in the parliament) that respects everyone regardless of race.

Self confidence of the students is built by the teacher giving rewards to the students if the students can sing a song well. The teacher also gave students opportunities to choose the songs and the language they would like to use. The languages used in songs by the students are, among others, Dutch, English, and Turkish.

Based on observations and interviews in the middle school (Cals College Nieuwegein), it is found that students are taught about democracy at this level. From the overall observation of learning in the classroom there are the same characteristics, i.e. the teacher started the lesson by reminding students to do tasks that had been given in the previous meeting, giving a brief instruction about the tasks that must be conducted by the students, after which students are divided into several groups to perform group tasks for 20 minutes, and then it is the turn for students to present their performance.

Such a learning process shows that the democratic values are embedded in the process of learning. The materials to be learned is not entirely received from the teacher, but is also developed by the students. When the students are discussing with friends in groups, they are actually learning about democracy.

Democratic attitude is also reflected in people's lives in the Netherlands. The Dutch are not used to call someone with the titles in front of his/her original name, as is common in the Eastern nations. For example, students can call the teacher or their parents just by the name, without necessarily preceding it with the title Prof. or Mr.

Critical thinking is also developed in the learning process. The students were given opportunities to criticize the work presented by the other groups.

At the university level these values are still developed further by emphasizing more on their intensity. Critical thinking, democracy, objectivity, discipline, independence, cooperation, and tolerance have become integrated parts in the life of the Dutch academic community.

The values are also embedded in the life of Dutch society. The prominent values in Dutch society are, among others, discipline, democracy, and tolerance. Dutch society is very compliant to laws and rules. Almost in every aspect of life (including cutting down trees) there are rules, and most people follow the rules obediently. Democracy and tolerance values are reflected in the freedom to choose the way of life. For example, people are not forbidden to drink alcoholic beverages, as long as they do not disturb the surrounding. Kissing in public is also very common.

1. **Developing Character Education in Indonesia**

Basically, the values of discipline, democracy, tolerance, and objectivity are also developed in the process of learning in Indonesian education. The difference only lies on the approach to learning, which is conducted by indoctrination. The teachers always said how important those values are to be always upheld by the students, but the methods used to establish the values tend to be verbal, and the process is less supportive for such values to be applied or practiced.

Based on observations on the learning the art of music in several junior high schools in Yogyakarta Special Province, the learning process of art music is more teacher-centered. There is a tendency that teachers become the (only) source of the learning materials. Students were just asked to respond to the materials presented by the teacher. The teacher would patiently, carefully and whole-heartedly give examples, train, and correct the students' techniques.

The top-down learning process makes the students familiar to accept the rules from party whose position is higher. Critical attitude and the courage to express opinions are relatively less developed.

This is also reflected in people's lives. Indonesian society has been accustomed to accept the rules, norms, and traditions as it is, without questioning its rationality.

Life of the Indonesian people runs smoothly following the teachings of the religion they believed. The dogmatic rules are easily accepted by society. Thus, government and office holders have a very important role in regulating the order of life.

The religious atmosphere is very thick in the life of Indonesian people. For example, five times in a day the *adzan* (call for prayers) is always heard boomed out from every mosque is spread all over Indonesia, indicating that the time to do the prayers has come. *Mushola* (small mosque) is also available in schools and colleges for the campus community to do a prayer as it is the obligation of Muslims to pray at least 5 times a day.

In the field of music, religious music is also growing. It is the music with lyrics teaching about or related to religion. One type of religious music that exists in Indonesia is *nasyid*. This music format is often used as extracurricular activities in Islamic schools as well as in some public schools.

1. **Conlusion**

Based on the observation, library study, and research analysis, it can be concluded that:

1. Teaching and learning music in Netherlands has implemented student-centered, while in Indonesia this approach is not fully implemented yet.

2. Teaching and learning music for theory and practice in Netherlands are taught integratedly as a unity, while in Indonesia those are separated. There is a tendency that theory has more portion than the practice.

3. In Netherlands, learning materials among the educational levels are closely interdependent.

4. Drawing on the strengths of both models, a music teaching and learning model has been developed as a medium for character building in Indonesia based on: 1) constructivist theory; 2) students-centred learning; 3) thematic learning integrating theory-practice; 4) contextual learning; and 5) self-awareness.

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