

THE 21ST CENTURY YOUTH COMPETENCIES

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ABSTRACT

The youth is the next generation of the nation. When the youth develop their competencies, then not only is their own quality of life enhanced, but they also contribute to the quality of life for the nation as a whole. This paper aims to define the importance of the 21st century competencies of youth and strategies to develop the 21st century youth competencies. The results of this paper are expected to give information and recognizing the shortcomings and advantages of today's youth competencies so educators could improve them effectively.

Keyword; 21st competency, youth

INTRODUCTION

In every turn of the times and changing times, youth are always able inspire and accompany the transition process. Youth with all inherent potential in itself has a strategic role in moving the nation, both as a force moral, social control, as well as agents of change. In their hands a civilization the nation is at stake. Ir. Soekarno, Indonesia first president once said, "A thousand elder can dream, but one young man can change the world".

Realizing the youth as asset of national development, it needs to takes the youth of morals noble, healthy, tough, intelligent, independent, and professional. Strategic potential and role youth need to be developed through awareness, empowerment, and movement youth development. All of these can be reach by education.

Education is not only about making sure all children can attend school. It is about setting young people up for life, by giving them opportunities to find decent work, earn a living, contribute to their communities and societies, and fulfill their potential. At the wider level, it is about helping countries nurture the workforce they need to grow in the global economy.” (UNESCO, 2012)

Education is central to development and to the improvement of the lives of young people globally, and as such has been identified as a priority area in

internationally agreed development goals. Education is important in eradicating poverty and hunger and in promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. Increased efforts towards education accessibility, quality and affordability are central to global development efforts. (UNDESA, n.d.)

What kind of education for young people to be able to address their aspirations and challenges, fulfil their potential, and influence current and future social and economic conditions and opportunities? Encourages a more balanced approach to assisting students in developing the knowledge, skills, and characteristics that will lead them to become personally successful, economically productive, and actively engaged citizens.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Youth

Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. To define youth, age is the easiest way, particularly in relation to education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. The United Nations defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (UNDESA, n.d.). Law of Republic Indonesia, Number 40, on 2009 mentioned that youth are Indonesian citizens entering an important period of growth and developments that are 16 to 30 years old.

In Indonesia, based on the results of Susenas Year 2016, about one in four Indonesians are youth. The number of youth is around 62.06 million youth from 257.9 million people across Indonesia. By 2016, more than half of Indonesia's youth work. Youth involved in economic activity is quite high, it is stated with a youth TPAK value of 61.22 percent. That is, about three of five youth working, preparing for a job, or looking for a job.

Most of the youth work as laborers and services, as many as 45.45 percent, followed by operator and crude workers as much as 39.74 percent, then the rest as professionals, leadership and administration. More than half youth workers work as

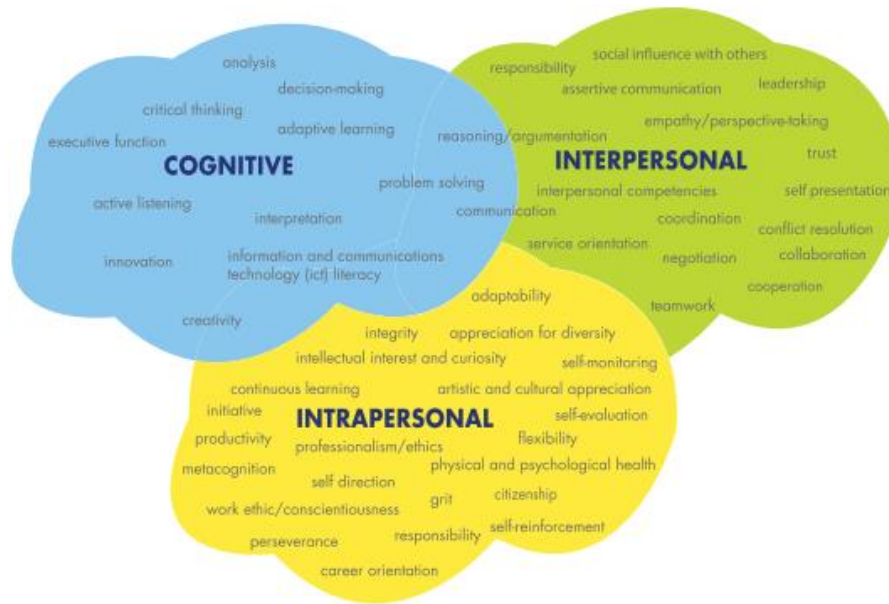
laborers (55.33 percent), followed by workers family / unpaid (17.44 percent), and self-employed (10.57 percent). Workers youth work more as formal workers than informal, that is equal to 56.72 percent versus 43.28 percent. The value of open unemployment rate of Indonesian youth by 2016 is 13.44 percent. Every 100 youth labor force, there are about 13 to 14 unemployed youths who are preparing for business or looking for a job.

Competencies in 21st Century

Traditionally, cognitive competencies in critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving have been regarded as key indicators for success. However, changing economic, technological, and social contexts in the 21st century mean that interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies have become much more important than in the past. Employers are increasingly valuing “soft” skills such as teamwork and leadership skills. Pellegrino and Hilton (2012, p. 55) cite evidence that “people skills” are “an important determinant of occupations and wages”, concluding that young people’s social skills affect their job prospects in adulthood.

By thinking in terms of the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal domains and by recognizing that various competencies may be associated with more than one domain, we can develop a better understanding of the interplay of competencies that is required to support deep learning practices. This also encourages a more balanced approach to assisting students in developing the knowledge, skills, and characteristics that will lead them to become personally successful, economically productive, and actively engaged citizens.

Figure 1: “21st century skill” grouped into three broad domains



(National Research Council, July 2012, p.2)

Fullan & Scott (2014, p.6- 7) defines 21st century competencies into 6’c:

1. Character

“qualities of the individual essential for being personally effective in a complex world including: grit, tenacity, perseverance, resilience, reliability, and honesty.”

2. Citizenship

“thinking like global citizens, considering global issues based on a deep understanding of diverse values with genuine interest in engaging with others to solve complex problems that impact human and environmental sustainability.”

3. Communication

The “mastery of three fluencies: digital, writing, and speaking tailored for a range of audiences.”

4. Critical Thinking

“critically evaluating information and arguments, seeing patterns and connections, constructing meaningful knowledge and applying it in the real world.”

5. Collaboration

“the capacity to work interdependently and synergistically in teams with strong interpersonal and team related skills including effective management of team dynamics, making substantive decisions together, and learning from and contributing to the learning of others.”

6. Creativity

“having an ‘entrepreneurial eye’ for economic and social opportunities, asking the right questions to generate novel ideas, and demonstrating leadership to pursue those ideas into practice.”

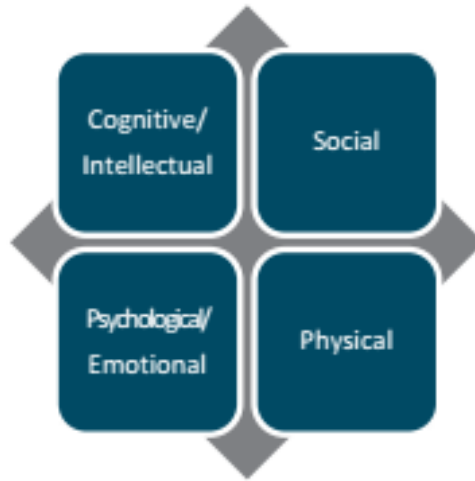
21st century competencies are competencies that will enable children and youth to face complex challenges now and in the future. These competencies help children and youth to reach their full potential to the important foundational skills of literacy and mathematics, and to the core learning in other subjects

The reasons why important to focus on 21st century competencies are various. In brief, the reasons are: (1) Changes in the work force from an industrial model of production to a rapidly transforming, technology-driven, and interconnected globalized knowledge economy. Such an economy requires competencies suited to dynamic and unpredictable models of economic and social development; (2) Emerging evidence on how to optimize learning, including the use of technological innovations to deepen and transform learning; and (3) Changing expectations on the part of learners, who are demanding an education system that is more connected and relevant to their everyday lives (The Ontario Public Service, 2016).

The 21st Youth Competencies

The 21st Century Youth Competencies are those that research and practice have found to be essential for preparing young people for economic and civic participation in their communities and country, and for supporting their development as healthy, competent, confident individuals who feel a sense of connection to others and to their communities.

The 21st Youth Competencies



Source: Mac Neil (2013)

21st youth competencies defines broadly to include the knowledge and skill or abilities a person needs to lead a productive, fulfilling, happy and healthy life, and focuses on those competencies that cut across cultures, context and ages. 21st youth competencies are divided into four domain: Cognitive/intellectual, (2) Social, (3) Psychological/ emotional, (4) Physical. Each domain refers to a critical aspect of positive youth development (and human development in general). Certain context may focus on one domain more than another, however all four domains are considered and integrated.

Domain	Competencies
Cognitive/Intellectual	Critical thinking Problem solving Decision making Planning Literacy/numeracy Academic achievement IT/media skills Vocational/ workplace readiness skills

Social	Communication Conflict management Collaboration/teamwork Cross-cultural competency Leadership Ability to develop and maintain healthy and supportive relationships Connection to community
Psychological/Emotional	Self-esteem Initiative/self-direction Self-efficacy Empathy/compassion
Physical	Healthy decision making related to nutrition, exercise, and hygiene Avoidance of risky behaviors

METHOD

This paper based on literature study to review some relevant theory about 21st Century Youth Competencies.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

Develop 21st Century Youth Competencies

The increased complexity of these challenges makes it all the more important that we do a better job preparing our students as problem solvers. We must provide students with improved strategies to help them deal with problems – this is what holds the most promise in our education system. Problem-based learning is one such strategy that teachers not only present information but they also

learn along with students and help them become more skillful problem solvers. In this capacity, students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge; they are decision makers about the nature and structure of their own learning (Barell, 2010, pp. 177, 178–79)

Recognizing the importance of equipping youth with 21st competencies, the next question is what is the best strategies to equip youth with 21st century competencies? Fullan and Langworthy note, strategies “may range from project-based learning through direct instruction to an inquiry-based model” (2014, p. 20). The teacher uses different strategies depending on the needs of a specific student or task and analyses which strategy works best (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014).

The Role of Technology

One of strategies to help student learning 21st century competencies is technology. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21, 2009) draws on a number of research papers to identify the most important ways in which technology can enhance student learning and promote mastery of 21st century competencies. These include:

(1) Increasing student engagement and achievement.

Research shows that students are more engaged, intrinsically motivated to learn, and more successful when they can connect what they are learning to situations they care about in their community and in the world. Technology can provide access to real-time data, simulations to situate learning in the real world, and opportunities for students to link learning to their personal interests.

(2) Assisting in the assessment of student performance.

Technology can support assessment *for*, *as*, and *of* learning, providing real-time assessment information that deepens our understanding of student learning gains and challenges. Technology can also support the tasks of gathering and analyzing assessment information about student learning, thereby facilitating instructional decision making.

(3) Facilitating communication and collaboration.

Communication technologies provide pathways for connections among students, parents, and educators (P21, 2009, p. 18). Online learning fosters the exchange of ideas and effective practices with peers for both students and educators. “Digital teaching platforms have been found to provide powerful support for collaborative learning. Since representations of student thinking and work can be rapidly distributed in a networked classroom, teachers have the opportunity to direct everyone’s attention to specific participants and their contributions”, and students are able to build their knowledge through the contributions of their peers (Dede, 2014, p. 10).

The Role of Informal Learning

Studies of informal learning environments provide some evidence that informal learning can be used to teach cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal competencies in ways that promote deeper learning and the transfer of learning. “Informal learning takes place in a variety of settings, including after-school clubs, museums, science centers, and homes, and it includes a variety of experiences, from completely unstructured to highly structured workshops and educational programs” (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012, p. 153).

Lemke (2010) describes the growing influence of informal learning opportunities and the resulting impact on formal education systems as follows: The democratization of knowledge provides the opportunity for lifelong individual and group learning. For students to leverage that opportunity fully requires critical thinking, information literacy, and a measure of self-direction, all of which need to be developed in part by our school systems. The democratization of knowledge also provides tremendous opportunities for educators to begin transforming their schools into physical and virtual places of 21st century learning. Educators are at a crossroads. They can embrace this democratization of knowledge by authentically connecting their students’ formal and informal learning. Or, they can ignore it and

run the risk of obsolescence, becoming certification mills for the interactive learning that takes place out of school. (p. 263).

Enhancing the Quality of Education and Training

Poor quality education is more common among disadvantaged segments of societies, with education being poorly adapted to the cultural and linguistic contexts of particular groups. Equally important, poor quality education and training deny young people employment opportunities as well as the resultant earnings and improved quality of life. Ultimately, poor quality education risks reinforcing inequalities and sustaining inter-generational poverty and marginalization.

Increased efforts are needed to ensure that education at primary, secondary and tertiary level is respondent to the needs of young people and the realities in which they live, so as to adequately equip them for participation in social and economic life.

Promoting Non-Formal and Informal Education

Many education and training systems do not provide young people with the basic skills needed to escape poverty and unemployment, even when they continue to receive formal education. Non-formal education programs seek to fill this gap by providing learning and skills development opportunities that are relevant to the context in which young people live and seek their livelihoods. Often provided through youth and community based organizations, non-formal education facilitates the learning of life-relevant knowledge and skills, especially for disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Non-formal education should not be seen as an alternative to formal education, but rather recognized for its complementariness in providing a more fully rounded and skills based approach, equipping youth to meet the competing demands of work and personal life. There is also an increasing awareness about the importance of informal learning in different settings including in the workplace. The recognition of informal learning is one of a cluster of educational responses to the need to widen participation in education and training for reasons of social

inclusion and economic advancement. In many countries new and innovative schemes of recognition of non-formal and informal learning

Providing Alternative Learning Opportunities to Vulnerable Youth

Young people who drop out of school early are vulnerable to unemployment, poverty, teen marriage, pregnancy, and partaking in risky behaviors. In addition to preventing young people from dropping out of school, alternative learning opportunities that take into account the reasons why they are not in school are needed. These reasons usually include income poverty, gender, disability, family catastrophes, social conflicts and wars, as well as perceived low market returns to education. The challenge is to give these young people appropriate opportunities to consolidate their basic knowledge and competencies, and equip them with the relevant skills needed to find a job, set up a business or engage in other productive work.

Youth Professional Development

Professional development is a broad term that can refer to a variety of education, training, and support opportunities available to youth workers. Professional development has existed for several decades among national youth organizations, but professional development options have become increasingly diverse, reflecting the diverse paths people take to become youth workers.

Thus, professional development opportunities for youth workers are varied and may include but are not limited to: Higher education training, such as continuing education courses and degree programs; Pre-service training and orientation for new staff; In-service training provided by programs to current staff; Training seminars and resource centers provided by external organizations; Local and national credentialing systems and programs; Local and national conferences; Mentoring programs; and Ongoing informal resources, such as newsletters, online discussion boards, and “brown bag” lunches for staff members to share ideas and expertise.

CONCLUSION

Youth and education, both are a future investment entity nation. Youth is the main source of development as well as the key to change social, economic growth and technological innovation. While education is provisions that every young man must have in improving their quality of life. Education plays a vital role in influencing the development of civilization of human life. Besides being able to provide nutrition for human reason, education also able to build and develop human character becomes a better person, in science and morals to meet a civilization full of challenges and changes.

Education arrange 21st century youth competencies that will enable youth to face complex challenges now and in the future. These competencies help youth to reach their full potential to the important foundational skills of literacy and mathematics, and to the core learning in other subjects. 21st youth comptencies defines broadly to include the knowledge and skill or abilities a person needs to lead a productive, fullfiling, happy and healthy life, and focuses on those competencies that cut across cultures, context and ages. 21st youth competencies are divided into four domain: Cognitive/intelectual, (2) Social, (3) Psychological/emotional, (4) Physical.

To develop 21st Century Youth Competencies, could use many strategies; the role of technology that can enhance student learning and promote mastery of 21st century competencies, the role of informal learning that can be used to teach cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal competencies in ways that promote deeper learning and the transfer of learning, enhancing the quality of education and training, promoting non-formal and informal education, providing alternative learning opportunities to vulnerable youth and youth professional development.

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