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Title: Design for a Globally Responsive Local Educational Environment in 2025

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Educating Globally (9085)

Assessment 2: Design for a Globally Responsive Local Educational Environment in 2025

1. Introduction

Globalization is the process of making all the goods, services, labor, and cultures flow around from one country to another (Christie, 2008, p. 44). Cambodia, a country in Southeast Asia, soon will be integrated into Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community in the year 2015. This integration aims at the economic purposes. However, it is not only goods, services, and labor which flow around the region, but also cultures. When a person moves to work in another country, he/she needs to bring his/her own cultures along. This will cause the cultural diversities in a particular country as well as in the region. So, in order to live well and peacefully that person must be able to understand concepts of cultures of the country in which she/he is living too. For this context, Cambodia must be ready to compete in this manner too. How can Cambodia take the advantages from this? Education really does. Improving the educational system is unavoidable for Cambodia. Like the aim of the Education Strategic Planning for 2014-2018 is 'Building a Sustainable, Competitive and Harmonious Economy' (MoEYS, 2014, p.11). This means that to gain the competitiveness, the government has set out four pillars like:

1) training of skilled and productive labor to meet market demand and increase value added; 2) building educational and vocational training institutions and developing regulatory frameworks; 3) encouraging private sector participation; 4) strengthening the quality of education and promoting scientific research, technology development and innovation". (p.11)

For the year 2025, it is the time that Cambodia will not just integrate regionally but globally. In this context as Cohen (1997) stated that cultures and technologies are moving from one country to another without boundaries (as cited in Rizvi, 2005, p. 82). In response to this context, we need to prepare new pedagogy and curriculum which give the focus on the critical analysis of the relation between local and global issues (Edwards and Usher 2008; Slattery 2006; Sykes 2008, as cited in Duhn, 2012, 23). For this reason, I have come up with a new design for the high school, specifically for year 10 to 12, in terms of curriculum and pedagogies because I have taught in this level for a few years before coming to Australia for furthering my study. The name of the program I am designing is called "The Intercultural High School and the Green". This high school will adapt the three main dimensions respectively healthy environment, critical thinking skills, and cultural studies (Capra, 2009).

This idea will be next applied in all public schools (High school level) across Cambodia along with different types of subjects given to learners in class and the real practice too. This program will help maintain the environment in Cambodia and allows all students who get into the schools interact with others because it runs for all students regarding sex, religion, complexion, academic, and cultural backgrounds. In addition, those who get involved in this program will have a sense of loving the nature and protect the environment from being destroyed by human activities.

2. The School, Teachers, and Learners

The school is basically located in the suburb of Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia. It is on the 10 hectares land surface. In the school, there are a football field, a volleyball field, big gardens where vegetables are grown, trees, flowers, fish ponds, and 5 buildings for lecture and tutorial, and a dormitory.

The teachers for all the subjects are fluent in English as it is the medium of instruction. They must hold teaching qualifications with the specialized subject in addition to environment knowledge. Moreover, some more foreign teachers (paid and volunteered ones) will be recruited to teach English and cultures to students in the high school. For instance, the PEACE CORPS (American non-governmental organization) is now working with Cambodian high school specifically in the rural ones to provide them good quality of English and students also have a chance to learn the American culture as they need to communicate with their teachers. In addition, I will build the network with other non-governmental organizations for some volunteers like Fiona and Flora, an organization working for the sustainability of forest and animals. Some volunteers are allowed to teach the environment-related subjects and give the lectures during the seminars too. I also hope to accept teachers in ASEAN to have variety of cultures in the school. They will share different cultures of ASEAN and others where they have been to or studied.

For the learners, they are Cambodian citizens and international students who are interested in spending their time at the high school level in Cambodia. Before admitting into any grades, they need to be tested the language ability (English) and the general knowledge too. Doing so, the school is able to place them into the right group and they will have a chance to progress well. For the age of the learners, they should be between 16 and 19. The school also has the annual scholarship up to 10 places for those who get the highest scores during the entrance examination. For the on-going scholarship, the school gives all students who are the first class 100% fee-free and second class for 50% fee-free.

3. Curriculum

The curriculum will be divided into three main components respectively cultural related, critical thinking skills, and environment field. The cultural related dimension included subjects like Cross-cultural Studies, History of ASEAN and the World, Khmer Culture Studies, Khmer Language, Sociology, Sports, Music, and Arts. For the critical thinking skills subjects, I have Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry. For environmental related courses, I have Biology, Geography, Environmental Studies, and House Education.

Besides learning the theories (lecture in the class), I have included the real practice and tour study for all students to allow them to apply the theories in the real world. Thus, all these activities are linked to their classroom studies.

A. Role Play

While Students are taking courses related to cultures or environment, they are required to prepare the role play in the classroom. For instance, if they are learning about Japanese culture, they need to dress like Japanese people and then perform a short story. Sometimes, they might give a show about culture shock when they are in Japan. This role play happens once or twice a month based on the lessons requirements.

B. Study Tour

Students also get involved in the study tour during their study twice per semester. They will be sent to historic sites in Cambodia to learn more about Khmer culture, and then they can learn from this culture and live together or they will be sent to the neighboring countries to learn new cultures. Moreover, if students are taking the environmental subject, they will be sent to Natural Parks and Zoos across Cambodia such as the Kossamak Natural Park, Bokor Mountain, Botum Sakor Natural Park, Phnom Ta Mao Zoo, and some islands in along the coast in Cambodia. This allows all students to see the nature and study it. They need to write a short report after visiting each place. Moreover, Hacking and Barratt (2007) said that allowing all children to engage themselves with the environment will help the students to care for it not just only for today but for the long-term (as cited in Duhn, 2011, p.20).

C. School Garden Activity

Each high school will have a garden and a courtyard where trees, flowers, and vegetables are grown. This allows the students to engage themselves to nature or sources of their foods (Capra, 2009). Every student needs to attend the “Green Class” once a week. During that class, they need to take care of the flowers, trees, and vegetables in the school. They water them and put organic fertilizer to make help vegetables grow and then when it is time for the harvest the food stores in the school will use all the vegetables grown in the school garden as the ingredients in cooking. Moreover, students are encouraged to have their own garden at home.

D. Multi-Cultural Day

Every year the school will celebrate the multi-cultural day to provide students a chance to perform activities like dancing, singing, and selling foods in the school courtyard. They will enjoy all cultural activities and get to know other friends in the same school. This event happens twice a year at the end of each semester.

E. Debate Competition

The debate competition is help every year at the end of semester one which is in April. All students from grade 10 to 12 need to form a group of 5 and join the competition. The competition will first start in the class level and then move to the school level. The topics of the debate are in the relation to cross-cultural issues, environment, business, and morality. The last winner team will be awarded with a trophy, studies materials, and a certificate of admiration, and for those who are not in the final round will be given the certificate of attendance.

F. Clean City and House Campaign

This work requires students from each class to walk around the city and share the leaflets as well as explain people in all communities especially the slum and poor communities to take care of the hygiene and their surrounding living environment. This activity will help students to care for the environment as they need to learn what they need to share to other people they meet in the society. As the result, students know what obligation they have to the environment and others will start realizing how important the environment is to their lives.

G. One House One Tree

This activity is designed for all students to grow at least one tree at home, garden, or in the public places where they are allowed to plant. They then have to take care of that tree for at least three months and bring some friends there when they have time.

4. Pedagogy

The program is designed for the on-campus study with the support of technology in students' learning. Students need to attend classes for the whole day based on the schedule prepared by the school. Moreover, some homework and extra-material will be given through the e-mail and Moodle. Students sometimes need to turn in the homework or/and do the extra reading on the materials assigned by the subject teacher. Classes are run five days a week from Monday to Friday. Time for classes is 8:00-12:00 PM and 2:00-6:00 PM, so totally it is the 8 hours classes a day. So, it is basic the full-time program. All classes are equipped with the up-to-date teaching methodologies and technologies. It means that individual work, pair-work, and group work are applied in the right manner to help the students taste different activities in class and the real world. Furthermore, attendance for each class is compulsory. If students want to be absent from one class, they need to seek for the permission from the class teacher and school. On Saturdays, there is the extra lecture and tutorial session for the students who stay behind the others in the class. They can come for the extra class and get some more advice on their learning styles and progress from 8-11 AM. Finally, international students who are interested in being a part of the program must study on-campus only. There is no distance learning for such a program. The school also has the dormitory for international students who enroll.

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