

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

B.1. The Definition of group work assessment.

Studies on the effectiveness of assessment strategies in order to find the best way of assessing students' abilities remains an issue for teachers giving evaluations. This study is one of many studies that have been conducted in order to know what students' perceptions are toward group work assessment. Group work assessment is one of the strategies for assessing students which includes incorporation of an individual student's ability in doing the assignment (Martinez, 2003). Group work or group learning (also referred to as co-operative, collaborative or peer learning) is widely recognized within the higher education sector as being an effective teaching and learning methodology (White, 2014). It is true that by doing group work assessment and group activities in the class, teachers attempt to make students work as a team. This refers to encouraging cooperation during participation in group work activities by mixing each student's own abilities. In one group there will be different levels of ability among participants, so group work requires cooperation from each student in order to complete the required assignment. Without good cooperation and effective communication on the part of all, it might be impossible to complete group work assignments. In the same line with Martinez (2003), Davies (2009) defines learning in groups as having at least some of the following key attributes: collective perception, needs, shared aims, interdependence, social organisation, interaction, cohesiveness, and also membership. In other words, group work assessment requires some the characteristics that are mentioned above by Davies (2009), and with all of the characteristics above, group work could be done most effectively.

B.2. The Benefits of Group Work Assessment.

According to Mello (1993), there are many benefits available through group work assessment, such as allowing the teacher to develop more comprehensive assignments. Furthermore, students gain an insight into group dynamic and processes, and students can develop their interpersonal skills as they are exposed to the viewpoints of other group members. Thirdly, group work helps students become more prepared for the real world. By creating group work, teachers help students to develop their knowledge with the consideration that each student may have different knowledge, information, and even abilities. It helps teachers to encourage and challenges the teachers to create more interesting group work activity. As Bentley (2013) mentioned that group work is now considered as one of the best approaches for developing students' communication skills and acquiring knowledge. Working in groups requires interaction among students while each student helps others and accepts other students' opinions and avoids making others feel inferior. For example, in the real world, working in groups with good cooperation and interaction helps the students realize they must accept others' opinions and not be selfish. Students can also learn their own weaknesses and strengths while understanding that, as social individuals, people need help from others in life.

In addition, from the physical viewpoint, research stemming from the theories of Piaget (1932) and Vygotsky (1978), has shown that working with others can result in cognitive gains especially in cases where the differences between the partners' points of view force them to make some ideas as a respective quality that are going to be assessed. (Tolmie and Boyle, 2000, p.120). This means that the outcome of group work assessment can result in good interaction among the students. It is true that

students should cooperate and work together, but in this case a good interaction is needed to make good decisions when all of the group members have different ideas. Each student should respect others when they are sharing their ideas as respecting others becomes a part of assessing group work.

B.3. Issues in Group Work Assessment

Despite some advantages mentioned before, there are also many problems that appear in group work assessment. Rensburg (2012) stated that students' feelings and their different responses will affect the effectiveness of assessing students through group work. The teacher needs to consider that group work should be accepted by students as one of the best ways of assessing them during the learning process. In what the researcher has experienced during my teaching practicum in one of the Junior high schools in Salatiga, sometimes students thought that group work was different than assessing their work through individual assessment. In this case, students thought that group work assessment was not as valuable as individual assessment. As following by the study of Snyder (2011) stated that,

The student groups found similarities among negative group experiences with regard to lack of communication. The whole-class discussion chronicled students' perspectives of good and bad group communication skills and determined strategies for improving group communication, such as providing positive feedback, ensuring all members of a group participate, and delivering constructive criticism that focuses on the product, not the person. However, even after applying these strategies, all groups indicated that individual students' attitudes or personalities can be the most negative aspect of group interaction.(p.7)

The students will have different responses to the process of working as a group, most of them will have unproductive dialogue during the process and this causes a reduction in their learning time. (Kruger, 1992, Mugny and Doise 1978). If the

students do so, it can be a problem for the teacher since the students will not be able to complete the task well. They may even feel that group work assessment has failed.

Furthermore, in group work assessment there should be contributions from all of the partners or members in group. Although most students agreed that group experiences can provide effective learning experiences, they did not like working in groups due to the typical negative aspects, such as one of the student doing the majority of the work (Snyder, 2011). Contributions given by each students during group work assessment is also one of the important factors to be assessed by the teacher in group work assessment. This also could be a problem that students faced during the group working process. For example, some members may not do their work and share their ideas, but it forces the other students to do more than they should. This means that these hard working students who work more than they should will make more contributions than their fair share toward the work required for each student in one group. On the other hand, it can be a disadvantage for both sides too, especially for the students who haven't been involved in participating to complete group work assignment. It reduces the student's ability to improve their effort rather than increase their ability to think and resolve a problem that is discussed while they are doing group work.