

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this action research was to investigate the impact of Whole Brain Literacy (WBL) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as instruction and organization development interventions (IDI/ODIs) on students' learning styles and performance in Ethics classes at Assumption University (AU). On that basis, a new learning process model was explored and developed to raise the bar of standard and quality of AU.

In this study, the action research was conducted in AU Ethics classes reflecting AU core values and identity. Two main variables were students' learning styles with WBL/Kolb learning process model and students' performance described on WBL template. At the developmental stage, the complement of WBL and AI was used as the OD tool for the positive change from within so students with potentials learned effectively and grew holistically. There were a hundred and eighty-five participants in five Ethics classes. A hundred and fourteen participants from two classes were the experimental group with IDI/ODIs while seventy-one participants from the remaining three classes participated in the control group in accordance with traditional teacher-centered method.

Both qualitative and quantitative measurements were used for data triangulation. The research instruments consisted of a set of self-assessed forty-item questionnaire, and a set of pre-test and post-test with twenty multiple choice questions. To obtain the qualitative data, focus group interviews and direct observation were done in team basis. Both paired and independent samples t-tests were employed to answer research questions and to test the hypothesis. The result was drawn in two tiers: the control group and the experimental group. Before IDI/ODIs, it was found that there was no significant difference in any of the variables between groups when the mean scores were compared. However, the significant differences were indicated at post-IDI/ODI stage.

The clear distinction was found after the traditional lecture-based and student-centered approach to two different groups: control and experimental. It was clearly shown that WBL and AI had a positive impact on three students' learning styles: feeling, doing and thinking styles. The learning preference slightly changed and it was found that there was no significant difference on students' watching learning style. However, there was a significant change on three aspects of performance: self-esteem, sense of responsibility and creativity while the academic aspect of performance was improved.

On the other side, the findings indicated no significant difference in any of the variables of the control group at the post-IDI/ODI stage. Students' learning style, awareness of strength in learning and performance in the aspect of creativity, sense of responsibility and self-esteem were negatively changed, although the post-test scores reflecting their academic performance were increased.

Lastly, the researcher suggests a new teaching and learning practice integrated with the 5Es inside out learning process model for Ethics classes and others in AU to reach a higher standard and quality. The process starts from engaging, emerging, enabling, empowering and ennobling. Self-questioning and reflection in classes facilitate double loop learning which helps them self-learn and re-learn in both individual and team levels. Their values are reconnected to get a deeper exploration to become greater people holistically. Finally, students learn how to learn and manage themselves for higher performance. This study gives the implications on teacher selection, training and development. A set of recommendation is proposed for further practice and research.

