

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

A Christian education is trying to encourage students making judgments and decisions within Biblical framework as their accountability to participate on a redemptive life in Christ (Van Brummelen, 2009). It nurtures students to consider that they are created in God's images who have the ability to think critically and to bear responsibility in maintaining and cultivating the earth by taking roles in all aspects of life. Furthermore, students also need to consider that these images of God have fell in sins. They often do mistakes. But rather than focusing on that mistakes and failures, as people who already redeemed by God, students need to do repentances and practice out in action the commitments to be better. These kinds of attitudes should always be the principles for them living their life in this world.

By making judgments and decisions within Biblical framework, people should always show positive attitudes toward everything happens in their lives. These positive attitudes would then support their effort to create such meaningful environments, so that life would be worth to live. In the classroom, a smaller scope of life, both students and teachers should show positive attitudes toward teaching and learning processes. Talking about attitudes toward teaching and learning, people should consider several important parts of learning. Assessment, one of the essential parts of learning, would help students to acknowledge and to evaluate themselves by measuring how far

they achieve the goals that had been set before. Therefore, both students and teachers should also have positive attitudes toward assessments, so that they could really experience what does the meaningful learning really mean.

Eagly and Chaiken (as cited in Maio, Esses, Arnold, and Olson, 2004) said that in general, positive attitudes would often possess beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that show favorability toward an object. Also, Thurstone as cited in Erwin (2001) noted that attitudes could be observed through the obvious behavior or may be reported individually as their concerns. In conclusion, observing how students respond the assessments, would help teacher to identify their attitudes toward assessments; whether those are positive or negative.

Erwin (2001) said that defining attitudes, people should reflect on the fundamental nature of the objects being defined. Therefore, considering the nature of assessments would also be the important thing for measuring students' attitudes toward assessments. According to Brady and Kennedy (2005), monitoring students' progress in learning is what assessments all about. Through assessments, students are expected would be able to nurture the meaningful learning by celebrating the accomplishments and supporting learning challenges that might be faced by the students (Van Brummelen, 2009). Therefore, considering that assessments focus on the students' learning progress, favorability toward assessments would be shown when both students and teachers implement the assessments in purpose to nurture the meaningful learning by celebrating the accomplishments and supporting learning challenges during the teaching and learning processes.

This year, Grade 9 Extended Mathematics students encountered the new environment of mathematics class; which was extended mathematics class. Being gathered homogeneously, they became more competitive to be the best of the bests. However, based on the discussions with mentor teacher, researcher came to the conclusion that most of the students competed in the wrong way. Pursuing the highest scores in test was their, so that tend to do anything that they can to reach their purpose.

Further, researcher observed that the tendency was extremely seen on the Criterion A Test of Sequences and Series Unit (Summative Assessment). When they could not solve some problems, some of them were also trying to get answers from their friends and possess each other after the first 20 minutes, by saying that the test was difficult, they have no time to accomplish the test, they would fail together, and they asked for retest. As the result, researcher found there were 10 out of 12 students showed those expressions at the end of the test. Moreover, there were two students crying after the test, because they were too worried with their score test.

During the test, researcher tried to manage the class so that the circumstances could be better. Researcher reminded them about the rules of the test; they should be working independently. Researcher tried to build up their confidence by giving motivation words and asking them to consider their achievements during the learning processes; they succeed to generalize the definition and formula of arithmetic and geometric sequences and series, they succeed to ask questions and discover those own answers by themselves, and

they succeed to work on the problems using sequences and series' concepts. But it did not work at all.

Figuring out the reasons of the occurred phenomena, researcher reflected on her teaching and having discussion with mentor teacher. As the result, researcher realized that she was actually not emphasizing the importance of formative assessments well in the classroom. Researcher tried to give practices and homework to the students, but when the students rejected to submit those assignments, researcher did not take further action. Researcher explained to them that those assignments were purposed to help them improve their learning, but the students did not consider it as important things as they still repeat the same thing in the next assignments. A mini quiz was also given to measure how far the students mastered the topic. However, when researcher wanted to discuss the result of the mini quiz, the students rejected the evaluation because they realized that they did not do the mini quiz well.

Van Brummelen (2009) said that knowledge should be seen as something beyond the intellectual comprehension and analysis, it is also related to people's attitudes, dispositions, and actions that should intentionally lead them into commitment to serve each other. Therefore, pursuing the true knowledge, students' attitudes are also important to be developed. In fact, researcher identified that students' attitudes toward the test and learning processes were not appropriate with its nature. Thus, researcher decided to conduct Classroom Action Research (CAR) which its focus is to improve students' positive attitudes toward assessments.

Erwin (2001) said that attitudes are essentially seen as the evaluative beliefs about certain object, that might be constructed correspondently with either the direct experiences or observations and interactions; the positive experience might develop the positive attitudes. Therefore, researcher tried to improve students' positive attitudes by providing chances for students experiencing how the assessments would give them advantages in their learning processes. The assessments that had been chosen by the researcher was developmental student portfolios. Researcher chose the development students' portfolio, because it is a very useful tool for assessing the students' holistic growth and development during a certain period of time (Wyatt & Looper, 2004).

In this portfolio, teacher asked students to keep their learning evidences in a portfolio folder. There would be rubrics that were made based on the IB Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills to help students directing themselves in developing the student portfolios. Further, the behaviors that would be occurred while the students are treating the student portfolios would be the main indicators of measuring students' attitudes toward formative assessment.

The student portfolios were chosen by researcher because it gave advantages for students in learning; helping the students to consider their achievements and developments during the learning processes. By considering their self – developments, the students should be more confident in learning and hopefully start to see the test score as a tool to evaluate their learning rather than something that should be pursued. In addition, by developing student portfolios, students would realize that the test is just one of many ways

the teachers recognize their achievements in learning. Therefore, their purposes of learning should no longer to reach the highest score in test but also to engage in every daily lesson that they followed as it would be important to prepare them serving and contributing themselves in their own environment in the future.

1.2 Research Questions

1.2.1 Do the student portfolios improve students' positive attitudes toward assessments?

1.2.2 How do the student portfolios influence the students' positive attitudes toward assessments?

1.3 Research Purposes

1.3.1 To know do the student portfolios improve students' positive attitudes toward assessments.

1.3.2 To know how do the student portfolios influence students' positive attitudes toward assessments.

1.4 Explanation of Terms

1.4.1 Positive Attitudes toward Assessments

Positive attitudes toward assessments are positive evaluations manifested by predisposition to think, feel, and behave toward assessments, that are constructed by experiences and could be observed through certain behaviors (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Allport as cited in Erwin, 2001; Thurstone as cited in Erwin, 2001). Specifically, in this CAR, the positive attitudes toward formative assessments could be seen in how well students treat the formative assessments, respond to the

feedbacks, do the revisions, and reflect and assess themselves in learning. In addition, by showing positive responses while the test is conducting, being confident and focus to do the test, and also showing positive responses toward evaluations of the test, it could be seen whether the students try to develop the positive attitudes or not.

1.4.2 Student Portfolios

Student portfolio is a meaningful and purposeful collection of works that is functioned as a tool to help students acknowledging periodically their personal growth and achievement in learning (Box, 2019; Lam, 2018; and Van Brummelen, 2009). In this CAR, researcher would implement several features that are important to be considered which are explaining the purposes and regulations of student portfolios, explaining the timeline and submission date of student portfolios, incorporating the student portfolios in teaching and learning processes, and also evaluating the implementation of student portfolios in the classroom.