

An Evaluation of The Desired Characteristics of Students Under The Project of Moral Development in Private School

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ABSTRACT

This research was to evaluate activities conducted according to the Project of Moral Development (PMD) in private schools in Thailand through self-evaluation by those involved of 3 groups: 1) school administrators 2) teachers attending the trainings and 3) students in those private schools. The quantitative data were gathered from those 729 private schools through 45,000 questionnaires of which 21,380 were returned from 359 private schools and then analyzed. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were collected by the authors through the schools visits, informal talks with those involved, and observations. The results showed that 1) most of the administrators and teachers were satisfied with the PMD, able to carry out activities according to it and wanted to proceed according to it again next year; that 2) the administrators were very satisfied with the physical changes in their schools, the changes of their students' behaviors, the psychological atmosphere among the teachers and students; moreover, they thought that their schools seemed much better in perception of surrounding communities; that 3) the teachers were somehow satisfied with the changes of students interested in pursuing knowledge, doing good, and pursuing health care; that 4) the students perceived that they had more skills in the Thai language, took more care of their own health and behaved more morally; that 5) they also realized that they were likely to morally and reasonably think and make decisions in their daily lives; and that 6) the following suggestions were given : a) The duration of only 3-4 months for organizing the PMD activities was very short so it should be extended at least 1 year before the assessment. b) The PMD's trainings should be provided especially for those school administrators because they play an important role in the development of the moral development system to be successful. c) The private schools should organize regular activities according to the PMD throughout the year for continuous moral development. d) The Office of the Private School Commission (OPEC) should organize a forum for the private schools to exchange experiences in organizing the PMD activities. In addition, e) the OPEC should have a clear policy on the moral development activities to create morale and encouragement for the private schools.

Keywords: Evaluation, Characteristics, Moral Development, Private School

1. INTRODUCTION

In Thailand, the National Education Act, 1999 and that amended (No. 2), 2002; Section 6 is enacted that “the provision of education shall be for development of Thai people so as to be perfect human beings including body, mind, intelligence, knowledge, and virtue and to have morality and culture in living life and capable of living with other people happily.(this means that being a good person of those around you and of society)” and Section 7 is also enacted that “ a learning process shall aim at instilling a correct conscience relating to politics and administration of a democratic form of government with the King as Head of State, an awareness to protect and promote right, duty, liberty, respect of law, equality, and human dignity, a sense of pride to be Thai, an awareness to protect public and national interest, as well as promoting religious, art, national culture, sport, folk wisdom, Thai wisdom, and universal knowledge, along with preserving natural resources and environment, a capability to make a living, an awareness to be self-reliance, having creativity, longing for knowledge, and self studying on a continuous basis.” In addition, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has set the policy of 3 good things (3Ds) to be instilled among Thai students namely Democracy, Decencies of morality, ethics and Thai-ness, and Drug-free living.

Around 10 years after the proclamation of the National Education Act, 1999; in 2009, results from evaluative studies revealed that some issues had been resolved and successful such as the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) had been established as a public organization for external quality assurance and accreditation of all levels and types of education. Nevertheless, lots of Thailand’s educational issues were still required to be resolved and improved, for example, quality of students, teachers, administrators and other educational personnel and so on. Therefore, principles, conceptual frameworks, visions, goals, guidelines for the 2nd decade of educational reform were reviewed, revised, reset and based on the National Education Act, 1999 and that amended (No. 2), 2002 so as to have a new learning system to promote the lifelong self-learning among learners and to encourage them to have learning habit, to be able to think critically for problem-solving and to have virtue-based knowledge and to learn formal or non-formal education. [1]

Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC) realized the educational issues, gave the first priority on the policy to promote morality among students and admitted that to instill the morality, virtue and ethics among them takes lots of time however. This is because the OPEC is required to have its all private schools be able to set up the desired characteristics of their students in accordance with their educational philosophies, curricula, standards of internal quality assurance or demands of private sectors; moreover, the desired characteristics should be consistent with the national philosophy of education. Then, the private schools have to organize various activities to promote and to develop the desired characteristics among their students regularly and systematically.

Therefore, the OPEC was required to arrange the Project of Moral Development (PMD) and to evaluate the desired characteristics of students in its educational institutions.

2. OBJECTIVE

This study aimed to evaluate the desired characteristics of students in general private schools, those run by special policy and those of vocational education according to the project of moral development.

3. DEFINITION

In this study, the desired characteristics refer to the ones to pursue learning, good deeds and health care.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The related literature is as follows:

4.1 APPROACHES OF EVALUATION

The approaches of evaluation that are suitable for projects in schools are as follows: [2]

1. Goal – based approach of evaluation assumes that the project's objectives are project evaluation criteria. The assessor will use these objectives to compare with the results from the project; therefore, the success of the project is that there is no or very little difference between the objectives and what the project has actually done.

2. Goal-free approach of evaluation is to evaluate everything resulting from the project and it is not necessary to use the project's objectives as the evaluation criteria because it may cause bias in consideration of the project results or sometimes, the project results may be ignored or the side effects caused by some projects may be overlooked because they are considered as not important.

3. CIPP[Context, Input, Process and Product]-Model-based approach of evaluation (Secretariat Office of the Educational Council, Ministry of Education, 2009) not only assesses whether or not the objective has been achieved but also evaluates for details of the Context, Input, Process and Product to help in making decisions about the project as well. This kind of assessment is popular because assessors will comprehensively know advantages, deficiencies and the effectiveness of the project. In addition, it is very useful to help administrators in decision-making.

An evaluation approach is a directional indicator of what is relevant and what the assessors have to do. Therefore, a selection of it must be in accordance with the needs of the evaluative users.

As for the goal – based approach of evaluation, as follows are the definitions of evaluation by some scholars advocating this goal – based approach:

Tyler [3] defines that the assessment is to examine whether the project outcomes or activities carried out are according to its objectives or not.

Davis, [4] defines that the assessment means the objective examination of the project objectives whether they attain the targets set or not and how well those targets have been achieved.

In conclusion, the above scholars view the evaluation as a process of determining success and failure of a project and how well it is in accordance with the purpose.

4.2 RELATED RESEARCH

As follows are summaries of the research related to this study:

In 2011, Sanga-songkroh [5], who had conducted research on an activity model based on the Buddhist three-fold training for instilling work discipline among production technician students, found that the model based on the Buddhist three-fold training could develop the work discipline among the students.

In 2008, Ongla-or [6], using the CIPP Model, examined the project evaluation of “Rongrian Withee Phut Phong Phud Petch Pathum [The School Following the Buddhist Way in Pathum Village]”. The results from the opinions on enhancement of students' quality and ethics by the study sample consisting of students' parents, students, school board, religious organizations and people in the community, revealed according to the elements of the CIPP Model as follows: In terms of the Context of the readiness of community, school curriculum and teaching and learning management for enhancement of students' quality and ethics was viewed by the sample participants at the high level; in terms of the Inputs of the readiness of educational personnel, administration, curriculum and teaching, school environment, budget, teaching materials and learning sources was viewed by the participants at the moderate level; in terms of the Process, the sample participants viewed that

the curriculum development, and the content together with learning activities which were suitable for the enhancement of students' quality and ethics and were consistent with the Project of the tripartite participation among the village, temple and school for the moral and ethical promotion were at the high level; in terms of the Product, the sample participants viewed that the students' behaviors and empirical performance was at the high level; and finally, in terms of the Impacts, the sample participants viewed that the effects on the school and community, the satisfaction of the parents and community and the dissemination of performance results to other schools were at the high level.

Deemangkorn [7], in 2006, conducted research using the CIPP Model, on "An Assessment of Moral and Ethical Development Programs and Desirable Values of Students at Ban Nong Krathum School (Chan Prachanukroh) under the Office of Ratchaburi Educational Service Area 2" and found that in terms of the Context, the project rationales were consistent with the government policies; the project objectives and goals were clear, comprehensive and suitable for the problems to be resolved and developed; the project activities were appropriate for teachers and students and able to morally and ethically develop the students and the overall Context was rated at the high level. In terms of the Inputs which were composed of educational personnel, budget, materials and the Buddhist-way activities as well as the factors for production of educational materials were overall rated at the high level. In terms of the Process consisting of the Buddhist-way activities, the production process of educational materials and the supplementary activities which were suitable and rated at the high level. In terms of the Products which were found that the students behaved in manners of economy, honesty, order and Thai etiquette were also rated at the high level.

5. METHOD

This study was conducted as a survey research where the data of the desired characteristics were both quantitatively and qualitatively collected from private schools under the OPEC.

In the evaluation of the desired characteristics of students under the Project of Moral Development (PMD), there were 3 types of private schools including 1) the private schools of general education, 2) those of special policy and 3) those of vocational education. These 3-type private schools were also divided into 2 groups according to 2 phases of the trainings: phase 1, April – May and phase 1, June – July.

Individuals who provided the data from such schools consisted of 3 groups of people, namely 1) school administrators, 2) teachers who had attended the trainings and 3) students in the classroom chosen to represent each classroom interval as follows: 1st interval by a classroom of Por. 3 (or grade 3), 2nd interval by a classroom of Por. 6 (or grade 6), 3rd interval by a classroom of Mor. 3 (or grade 9), 4th interval by a classroom of Mor. 6 (grade 12), 5th interval of Por-Wor-Chor (Vocational Education Certificate or grade 10 - 12) by a classroom of Por-Wor-Chor 3 (grade 12), and 6th interval of Por-Wor-Sor (Vocational Education Diploma or 2 years more) by a classroom of Por-Wor-Sor 2 (2 years after grade 12) and each classroom representative was composed of 30 students.

Tools for the quantitative data collection were 2 sets of the questionnaires of self-evaluation. The 1st set which was used with the group of the private schools attending the phase-1 training was composed of 3 types of the questionnaires used to collect the data from the school administrators, the teachers attending the trainings and the students respectively. However, the 2nd set which was used with the group of the private schools attending the phase-2 training consisted of only 2 types of the questionnaires to collect the data from the school administrators and the teachers attending the trainings.

As for the qualitative data collection, some of the authors visited some of the private schools involved in this study and had observations and talks with those involved in PMD.

As for the quantitative data collection, 45,000 sets of the questionnaire were mailed to 729 private schools. When they were returned, they were examined for its completeness for use. Then, there were 21,380 sets usable for data analyses. Its details are as follows:

1) The questionnaires were sent by mail to each school to collect data from the school administrators and teachers who had attended the trainings and students representing each class interval of the three- type private schools, namely, those of general education, those of special policy and those of vocational education. The researcher sent the questionnaires in 2 phases according to the time of the training programs. Details are as in Table 1

Table 1 Number of the Mailed Questionnaires

Training Phases	Number of the Mailed Questionnaires (according to school types)			Total
	General education	Run by special policy	Vocational education	
Phase 1 (from April to May)	220	160	194	574
Phase 2 (from June to July)	148	5	2	155
Total	368	165	196	729

Among 729 private schools which had received the questionnaires, only 436 private schools returned them. When the authors had examined their completeness of them, 77 schools were found that they returned the questionnaires later than the date due. Details are as in Table 2

Table 2 Number of the Returned Questionnaires

School types	Number of the Returned Questionnaires (according to school types)		
	In time	Later	Total (including both types)
General education	216	23	239
Run by special policy	56	18	74
Vocational education	87	36	123
Total	359	77	436

2) As for the qualitative data from the private schools which participated in the PMD, they were collected through observations and informal interviews with school administrators and teachers attending the Project trainings and their students when the authors visited the private schools including 3 schools of general education and 5 of vocational education.

6. RESULTS

The findings were summarized as follows:

1) Majority of administrators and teachers from 3 types of the private schools were satisfied with the project of moral development provided in the trainings by the OPEC; they took the system to be implemented in their schools. (Table 3)

2) The school administrators were very satisfied with the changes after the PMD. For example, in views of neighboring communities, the schools' images had improved; the physical conditions of the schools had also improved and the students had changed their behaviors in a better way, etc. (Table 4)

3) The teachers were fairly satisfied with the changes among students after the Project. For example, some students were able to critically think based moral reasons, to practice meditation and to have physical exercise. (Table 5)

4) The students perceived that their abilities in Thai improved: better reading, more communicable speaking, more effective writing and more efficient listening. The students perceived that they sometimes they thought and made decisions based on morality. The students perceived that they themselves had practically changed a habit about health care; thus, they took health care of themselves more regularly. (Table 6)

Table 3 Basic data and satisfaction with the moral development projects in the private schools based on the opinions of administrators and teachers

Types of the private schools	Personnel	Phase	Gender		Years of Experience	Project satisfaction			Project operational feasibility		
			Male	Female		lots of	fair	less	possible	Hard to be done	Impossible
General education	Administrators	1	93 (23.6)	107 (76.4)	\bar{X} = 11.80 years S = 8.64 years	122 (87.1)	18 (12.9)	- -	126 (94.7)	7 (5.3)	- -
		2	15 (20.0)	60 (80.0)	\bar{X} = 12.93 years S = 9.69 years	69 (92.0)	6 (8.0)	- -	70 (94.6)	4 (5.4)	- -
	Teachers	1	160 (18.1)	722 (81.9)	\bar{X} = 11.16 years S = 8.95 years	736 (84.9)	119 (13.7)	12 (1.4)	746 (91.6)	47 (5.8)	21 (2.6)
		2	86 (18.5)	380 (81.5)	\bar{X} = 12.23 years S=10.13 years	420 (89.7)	45 (9.6)	3 (0.6)	415 (89.1)	48 (10.3)	3 (0.6)
Run by special policy	Administrators	1	34 (61.8)	21 (38.2)	\bar{X} = 7.02 years S = 5.67 years	41 (74.6)	12 (21.8)	2 (3.6)	46 (83.6)	9 (16.4)	- -
		2	1 (100.0)	- -	\bar{X} = 4.00 years S = 0.00 years	1 (100.0)	- -	- -	1 (100.0)	- -	- -
	Teachers	1	137 (40.3)	203 (59.7)	\bar{X} = 4.90 years S = 4.91 years	235 (70.8)	87 (26.2)	10 (13.0)	271 (86.3)	33 (10.5)	10 (3.2)
		2	4 (100.0)	- -	\bar{X} = 2.25 years S = 1.89 years	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	- -	4 (100.0)	- -	- -

Table 3 Basic data and satisfaction with the moral development projects in the private schools based on the opinions of administrators and teachers

Types of the private schools	Personnel	Phase	Gender		Years of Experience	Project satisfaction			Project operational feasibility		
			Male	Female		lots of	fair	less	possible	Hard to be done	Impossible
Vocational education	Administrators	1	39 (45.9)	46 (54.1)	$\bar{X} = 12.29$ years $S = 9.33$ years	73 (86.9)	11 (13.1)	- -	73 (86.9)	11 (13.1)	- -
		2	1 (50.0)	1 (50.0)	$\bar{X} = 3.50$ years $S = 0.71$ years	2 (100.0)	- -	- -	2 (100.0)	- -	- -
	Teachers	1	198 (35.2)	364 (64.8)	$\bar{X} = 10.28$ years $S = 8.97$ years	452 (80.6)	103 (18.3)	6 (1.1)	452 (83.2)	82 (15.1)	9 (1.7)
		2	6 (75.0)	2 (25.0)	$\bar{X} = 4.88$ years $S = 3.09$ years	8 (100.0)	- -	- -	7 (87.5)	1 (12.5)	- -

Phase 1= being trained from April to May

Phase 2= being trained from June to July

Table 4 Average means (\bar{X}) and standard deviations(S) of administrators' satisfaction with the changes in their schools after the project operation Presented according to types of the private schools

Changes	General education		Run by special policy		Vocational education	
	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S
- In views of neighboring communities, the school images had improved.	2.82	0.38	2.63	0.49	2.67	0.47
- The physical conditions of the schools had also improved.	2.84	0.37	2.75	0.44	2.67	0.47
- The student behaviors had positively changed.	2.67	0.47	2.40	0.49	2.43	0.50
- The mental atmosphere of teachers had been better.	2.73	0.45	2.71	0.46	2.68	0.47
- The mental atmosphere of students had been better.	2.79	0.41	2.71	0.46	2.61	0.49
Total	2.77	0.32	2.64	0.31	2.70	0.26

Table 5 Average means (\bar{X}) and standard deviations(S) of teachers' satisfaction with the changes in the desired characteristics of students Presented according to types of the private schools

Changes in the desired characteristics of students	General education		Run by special policy		Vocational education	
	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S
- Pursuing learning	2.49	0.51	2.45	0.54	2.39	0.54
- Pursuing good deeds	2.74	0.44	2.33	0.55	2.42	0.57
- Pursuing health care	2.73	0.45	2.68	0.48	2.46	0.60
Total	2.66	0.34	2.49	0.36	2.43	0.45

Table 6 Average means (\bar{X}) and standard deviations (S) of students' opinions about the changes of students' changes in Thai language abilities, moral and ethical reasoning and health care Presented according to types of the private schools

Changes in Thai language abilities and moral and ethical reasoning	General education		Run by special policy		Vocational education	
	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S
Thai language abilities						
- Ability to read Thai fluently	2.69	0.48	2.66	0.49	2.58	0.50
- Ability to speak Thai properly	2.64	0.50	2.58	0.52	2.57	0.50
- Ability to write Thai correctly	2.62	0.52	2.65	0.50	2.57	0.51
- Ability to listen to Thai language effectively	2.59	0.52	2.62	0.51	2.58	0.51
Moral and ethical reasoning						
- Ability to think and make decisions based on moral, ethical and reasonable principles.	2.26	0.49	2.33	0.50	2.33	0.50
Health care						
- Exercising	2.40	0.55	2.34	0.54	2.20	0.58
- Eating healthy food	2.60	0.51	2.50	0.54	2.45	0.54
- Adequate rest (sleep)	2.65	0.52	2.59	0.53	2.49	0.58
- Maintaining the cleanliness of the body	2.90	0.31	2.86	0.36	2.89	0.33
- Wearing clean clothes	2.92	0.30	2.89	0.33	2.91	0.30

0.50 - 1.50 = Less satisfaction / Less participation / Less change
 1.51 - 2.50 = Fair satisfaction / Fair participation / Fair change
 2.51 - 3.50 = A lot of satisfaction / A lot of participation / A lot of change

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the evaluation of desirable characteristics according to the PMD in the private schools, recommendations from the research results are as follows.

1) The PMD's trainings should be provided especially for those school administrators because they play an important role in the development of the moral development system to be successful.

2) The PMD should be undertaken continuously and regularly because the moral development requires continuity and regularity to be successful.

3) The OPEC should provide a platform for private schools to exchange knowledge and organize moral development activities. Thus, the schools having been successful for good moral development activities are to be selected to present their successes to other schools to learn and then open the platform to exchange knowledge with other schools to get new ideas to apply to their own schools.

4) The OPEC should have a proactive policy focusing on morality, virtue and ethics to create morality-oriented atmosphere at school because majority of private schools under the OPEC have given high priority on the moral development. Therefore, if the OPEC has such a clear policy, it will help the affiliated schools to be encouraged to develop morality further.

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