
The Model Development of Agricultural Education Management of Buriram Rajabhat University: A Case study of the opinion on Informal Education

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This study aimed to explore condition of agricultural education management and opinions about its model development. In-depth interview was used for data collection administered with 3 groups of respondents (56 persons) obtained by purposive sampling: 1) 50 farmers in 23 districts of Buriram province; 2) 4 local scholars who were admired in Buriram province, 2010-2014; and 3) 2 agricultural businessmen. Content analysis was conducted and frequency/percentage, were also used for the statistical treatment. Results of the study revealed the following:

1. More than one-half of the respondents (57.1%) were females, ordinary persons (78.6%), 41-5 years old (53.6%), and their income range was 3,000-6,000 baht per month (41.1%).

2. Respondents of the 3 groups understood about agricultural education management most in terms of flexible education without curricular program and certain learning time span. The teaching/learning facilitation was based on experiential-based and it was experience in daily life activities (35.92%). The respondents joined teaching/learning activities with specialists in agricultural, local scholars, community leaders, and agricultural academics most (42.86%). Besides, 21.43 percent learned through actual practice and discussion among friends and 28.5 percent learned through the principle of sufficiency economy and mixed farming.

3. Respondents of the 3 groups suggested about the model development of agricultural education management on the application of new technology to existing local wisdoms most (57.14%).

Keywords: The model development of agricultural education management, local wisdoms, opinions of the respondents

Introduction

Buriram is an important province in lower northeastern Thailand. This

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province has many sanctuaries such as Khao Panomroong and Prasat Muang Tum sanctuaries which are well-known among Thai people. Buriram province is the source of ancient potteries (before Sukhothai Kingdom) and there are famous products such as Putthaisong silk clothes, jasmine rice, Buriram Chinese sausage, and Buriram fermented shrimp. Besides, Buriram province is now developing to be an important tourist destination in terms of sports. Most of the people in Buriram province were engaged in farming forestry, and fisheries (328,584 out of 965,000 populations). It is the important source of cash crop production such as rice, cassava, sugar, and Para rubber and many people there also domesticate pigs, ducks, chickens, etc. Most workforces in Buriram province have educational attainment lower than elementary school (362,051 persons or 37.7%, Buriram Workforce Office. 2014). Therefore, it can be seen that potential and quality of people in Buriram province must be developed if the province wants to be progressive in all aspects and this must be consistent with the local context.

Non-formal education is an important form of educational facilitation to the public. This kind of education needs to facilitate appropriate environmental conditions, situations, readiness, and an opportunity to develop quality of life of all people in the society (Imsuwan, 2001). Besides, informal education can be carried out the whole life or it can be called long life education (Department of Non-formal Education, 2000).

The researcher as an instructor at Faculty of Agricultural Technology, Buriram Rajabhat University which is under the supervision of the Office of Higher Education Commission puts the importance on a model development of non-formal education facilitation of the university. Therefore the researcher decides to develop a model of agricultural education facilitation which is consistent with the local context in terms of learner, facilitation, resource, and current environment.

Objective of the Study

Specifically, the objectives of this study were to explore:

1. Condition of agricultural education of people in Buriram province.
2. Opinions about the model development on agricultural education facilitation.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The informants in this study consisted of 56 persons obtained by purposive sampling. They were 50 farmers from 23 districts of Buriram province; 4 local

scholars of Burirum province; and 2 agricultural businessmen. Data were collected during May-October, 2015.

Research Methodology

This study comprised 3 steps as follows:

1. Explore needs for the development of agricultural education by investigating concepts and theories on non-formal education and related research. There was the determination of scope and question issues which are consistent with the objectives of this study.

2. Structured Interview Schedule was used as a tool for data collection and it consisted of 3 parts:

Part 1. Data on socio-economic attributes of the informants

Part 2. Opinions of the informants about the model development

Part 3. Suggestions about the model development

The research tool was inspected by 5 scholars for suggestions and improvement (IOC = 0.84).

3. The researcher collected data through in-depth interview during May-October, 2015.

4. Data were analyzed by using content analysis. Frequency and percentage were used for the statistical treatment.

Results of the Study

Table 1. Socio-economic attributes of the informants.

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
.1Sex		
- Male	24	42.86
- Female	32	57.14
.2Status in the community		
- Ordinary person	44	78.57
- Community leader/local administrative organization leader	4	7.14
- Local scholar	2	3.57
- Village committee	6	10.72
.3Age (year)		
- 30-20	1	1.79
- 40-31	7	12.50
- 50-41	30	53.57
- 60-51	11	19.64
- 70-61	7	12.50

Table 1. Continued

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
.3Educational Attainment		
- Elementary school	30	53.57
- Lower secondary school	7	12.50
- Upper secondary school	8	14.28
- Bachelor's degree	10	17.85
- Higher than bachelor' degree	1	1.78
.4Main occupation		
- Farming	46	82.14
- Hired worker	2	3.57
- Other	8	14.29
.5Income per month (baht)		
6,000-3,000	24	42.86
9,000-6,000	11	19.64
12,000-9,000	5	8.93
12,000and above	16	28.57

Table2 . Understanding about non-formal education of the informants.

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
1. Uncertain form of education, curriculum, and learning time span and learning occurs from direct experience in daily livelihoods	19	33.92
2. Learning by myself or from community leader/training offered by various agencies such as village committee and local administrative organization	11	19.64
3. Independent learning through various sources based on interest and convenience	9	16.07
4. Learning by doing or experiential learning/trial an error	7	12.50
5. Learning by myself/learning in various places/local wisdom learning	3	5.35
6. Learning by myself through reading, watching television, listening to the radio, and knowledge exchange	2	3.57
7. Learning form the Royal Initiatives Project and various learning centers	2	3.57
8. Opinion exchange in various learning source in the community	1	1.79
9. Agricultural learning/agricultural livelihoods which is beneficial to correct farming	1	1.79
10.Learning is consistent with occupations of people in the community social context, community environment such as aqua-culture, organic vegetable growing atc.	1	1.79

Table3 . Learning by myself.

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
1. I learn from local scholars, the community, and academics and practice by myself	24	42.86
2. I read books on agriculture and reliable data from internet, websites, T.V., and talking with people having agricultural experience.	11	19.64
3. I learn through trainings or from community leaders, and resource persons	7	12.5
4. I learn from various educational projects such as the projects of the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives of through T.V., radio, printed material, specialist, etc.	5	8.93
5. I seek for knowledge by myself and develop my tasks in accordance with mixed farming	4	7.14
6. Community leaders offer a training on agricultural	2	3.57
7. I learn from my parents, my grandfather and grandmother	2	3.57
8. I learn from direct experience	1	1.79

Table4 . Independents learning which accidental occurs of the informants.

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
1. Learning through actual practice and talking with friends	12	21.43
2. Learning through trial an error	10	17.86
3. Learning through experiential learning and educational tour	9	16.07
4. Learning through natural conservation tourism and observation	5	8.93
5. Learning through local wisdom using	5	8.93
6. Learning at various learning centers and through educational tour in villages.	4	7.14
7. Learning through educational tour and then develop my farm.	4	7.14
8. Learning through travelling, educational tour, and actual practice	4	7.14
9. Learning through educational tour and inquiry	2	3.57
10. Learning through leaflet, brochure, and information board	1	1.79

Table5 . Independent learning style about agricultural education facilitation.

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
1. Learning through the philosophy of sufficiency economy principles and mixed farming	16	28.57
2. Learning by myself, establishing and planning a project, finding various data, and practice	12	21.42
3. Learning through the New Theory agriculture and the philosophy of sufficiency economy principle	8	14.28
4. Learning through successful farmers and practice	8	14.28
5. Learning through training and educational tour	5	8.92
6. Learning through various media e.g. radio, T.V. textbook, agricultural journal, internet, etc.	4	7.14
7. Following farming principles of parents and adaptation is depending on weather condition	2	3.57
8. Learning through knowledge exchange among friends	1	1.79

Table6 . Suggestions about the model development.

Items	Fequency (n56=)	%
1. Focus on thinking adaptation of farmers by the application of new technology and existing local wisdom	32	57.14
2. Following the New Theory agriculture and putting the importance on the philosophy of sufficiency economy	7	12.50
3. Beginning with a happy family such as the preparation of a family account then knowledge and experience will be transferred to family members automatically	7	12.50
4. Building awareness of local wisdom value on agriculture in the local area as a learning source of new generation	4	7.14
5. Building coordination by beginning with self-development so that other will accept. Promoting learning exchange with and outside the community	3	5.35
6. Emphasis on continuity and sustainability aiming to make farmers be able to be self-reliant	3	5.35

Discussions

.1 According to results of the study in terms of socio-economic attributes, it was found that most of the informants were did farming as their main occupation. The highest educational attainment of the informants was elementary school and their monthly income was 3,000-6,000 baht. This implied that it was consistent with the report on workforce situations of Buriram province which revealed that most of the people (55%) in the province

were engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (Burirum Workforce Office, 2014).

.2The informants understood independent agricultural education facilitation most in terms of flexible education and there is no certain curriculum/learning time span. Learning occurs through direct daily livelihood experience. This conforms to a study of Coohchuen (2015) on the facilitation of independent education in the school. He claimed that the independent education facilitation is a learning form arising from needs an interest of an individual to learn what is beneficial to his life. Since there is change from the industrial society to the information society, learning for the development of quality of life is essential. Thus, adults and teenagers must spend their time for learning more than ever; not only in their work place or classroom but also after work or classroom and during weekend. Thus, independent education is an important component of life-long education. This includes learning through internet, documents, group talking, T.V., radio, education tour, etc. It can be said the independent education is an important method assisting people to learning and understand what is going on around them.

.3The informants shared the same activity of the independent education most in terms of learning from specialists in agriculture, local scholars or community leaders, and agricultural academics and then practiced by themselves. This conforms to a study of Chankhachorn (2008) which found that a guideline for the facilitation of independent education for promoting life-long education consists of learning promotion programs, learning promotion activities, and learning promotion factors, e.g. the provision of various learning sources, knowledge management, educational media and technology, learning network development, and experiential learning. This also conforms to a study of Puengpian (2011) which found that people in Posa municipality, Muang district, Angthong province needed for learning sources of independent education. They suggested that learning sources should be in the community and local wisdoms should be promoted in terms of learning roles.

.4The informants had the occurring of accidental learning most in terms of learning through actual practice and talking with friends. Normally, the prominent culture of people in northeastern Thailand is generosity and they are familiar with one another. Hence, talking with each other during free time of people there can be a channel for knowledge and experience exchange which results in accidental learning. This conforms to a study of Trisorn (2000) who had conducted a study on a model of the independent activity of learning through independent education is from learning through actual practice, knowledge or learning exchange, and a learning source having diverse learning

contents which meet needs and interest of learners. Furthermore, there is learning through various types of electronic and printed media.

5. Learning style of the informants in terms of agricultural education found most is learning through the philosophy of sufficiency economy principles and mixed farming. This might be because most of the communities of the informants were engaged in agriculture particularly on mixed farming in accordance with the philosophy of sufficiency economy. This also conforms to a study of Puengpian which found that the sample group of people in Posa municipality, Angthong province suggested that the independent education facilitation should involves in the philosophy of sufficiency economy and livelihoods.

Suggestions

1. According to results of the study, it was found that the facilitation of independent agricultural education covers activities on knowledge/learning exchange and local wisdoms. Hence, a study on knowledge seeking methods of individual should be conducted. This can be learned from successful people leading to the explanation of the learning process based on independent education, the accumulation process of knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes, and diverse thinking.

2. A study on a model or a guideline for the facilitation of independent study should be conducted so as to be the model which is appropriate with each local context.

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