

The Model of Buddhist Learning Activities for Social Studies, Religion and Culture

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research are: 1) to study the state of the Buddhist learning process of the Department of Social Studies, Religion and Culture (DSRC); 2) to create a model for Buddhist learning activities (MBLA) for DSRC; 3) to evaluate the results of MBLA operation. This study was carried out by means of the mixed method research. The tools used in collecting the data were: a five-rating scale questionnaire, a small group meeting of the experts and interviews. The research results indicated that the state of the Buddhist learning process in DSRC is divided into 2 activities: 1) learning 4 steps-activities according to the curriculum; 2) MBLA for DSRC consisted of 3 important activities: cultivating righteousness; training according to the principles of the Trisikkha (Threefold Studies); the development according to the principle of the Four Bhāvanā Dhammas; 3) the evaluation of MBLA for DSRC reported the opinion of the experts on MCLA at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 5.00$ and S.D. = 0.00), helpfulness at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 5.00$, S.D.= 0.00) and usefulness at the highest level (\bar{x} of 5.00, S.D.= 0.00). Parents and the community were satisfied with the behavior of the students at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. = .59). The top 3 mean of the studied items were: good-hearted and virtuous, ethical, and able to work with others effectively ($\bar{x} = 4.79, 4.61, 4.59$, S.D.= .45, .59, .61) respectively.

Keywords

Model, Buddhist learning activities, Department of Social Studies, Religion and Culture

Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020

Introduction

The teaching and learning management of the Thai education system in the past have failed in the learning management process to make the desired characteristics of the learners. In other words, it cannot compel individuals have a basic thinking and grasp the learning approach and management of lifestyle competencies. Thitna Khemmanee et al., [1] have conducted a multiple-case study to review the successful schools in terms of the learning process development. The results of this analysis show that one necessary issue was the promotion of academics' learning during a variety of ways, sufficiently and continuously; most teachers agree that the development of the learning process in line with the academic reform is unclear and that they want additional information and understanding. This learning has to be in progress because it helps teachers become more active in improving themselves. It is consistent with a study of the educational curriculum development of the network and pilot schools in the Northeast that reported that the sample teachers still failed to perceive a student-centered learning process,

particularly the introduction of innovative learning emphasizing the development of thinking skills integrated into classroom teaching [2]. During the past 2-3 years, the Ministry of Education has supported the learning reform program to improve student quality, it has resulted in the improvement of teaching and learning, organize teaching process that encourages students to think critically, research, and seek knowledge from a variety of learning sources, learn from real experience and get more practical. As the teacher has modified the learning process of students, students have a positive attitude towards learning, be close to the teachers, and being entertained in learning, but still, the achievement of a knowledge academic ability is not yet evident. The results of external quality assessment of educational institutions at the basic education level found that the student standard needed to be improved, "Standard 4: learners have the ability to think critically, synthetic thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, reflection and vision."

To solve this problem, some studies [3] [4] [5] have employed the Buddhist principle called 'the Four Noble Truths' in the learning process. In this learning process, students join the learning

activities while studying is one of the best ways to take part in self-study and practice. It helps students to develop their thinking independently, working as a group, practicing the process of searching for knowledge according to the Four Noble Truths. That is, when meeting a question assigned by the teacher, students can ask questions to find answers. They also can hypothesis, testing, experimenting, data gathering, inferring, group discussion, planning data analysis and presentation of data in various formats such as model representation, writing exhibitions in chart, diagram, report writing, booklets, brochures, posters, project planning, theatrical performances, role play, etc.

The problem of teaching and learning activities is also important as learning management is the organization of experience and environment to facilitate the learners' learning and teaching. Learning is the development of desirable traits both in knowledge, skills, attitudes and processes. Learning activities should be focused on the learner to perform the activity. The teacher is only a facilitator and the students will receive the results of their own development of thinking, problem solving operations, collaboration, planning, management, and techniques which are more valuable than knowledge. These can only be achieved when conducting process learning, organizing learning activities by using a process. Learning is therefore a learning arrangement that focuses on the learner as a "center", learns, thinks, answers and trains themselves to be self-reliant. The instructor must study and analyze courses, develop classroom curriculum to suit with the environment that will facilitate the learners' learning. After conducting the course, the teacher will have to evaluate the results, find pros and cons and make improvements until meeting with appreciation.

From such importance and problems, the researchers have seen the importance of a model for Buddhist learning activities (MBLA) in DSRC is one of the methods that teachers use the learning activities that focus on analytical thinking skills according to Buddhist principles, namely the Four Noble Truths and Trisikkha (Threefold Studies) [6]. In the learning activity stage, there will be a process to practice critical thinking skills, develop thinking skills, independent thinking processes, as well as operational skills on

the basis of the Trisikkha; morality, concentration and wisdom, which will create the effectiveness of learning. The research team is therefore interested in developing MBLA in the Department of Social Studies Subject Religion and Culture" to further use the research results to benefit schools in Khon Kaen Province.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are as follows: 1) to study the conditions of the Buddhist learning process of DSRC; 2) to create MBLA for DSRC; 3) to evaluate the results of MBLA operation.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted by means of the mixed method research in the field in the following stages:

Stage 1: Study the concept, principle, background, models, relationship, process of creating Buddhist learning activities, social studies, religion, and culture in the case study area and then select schools, by Purposive Sampling, that play an important role in organizing activities in Khon Kaen Province.

Stage 2: Study and collect data from a small group meeting of 25 administrators and each school teacher from 5 selected schools (5 from each) in Khon Kaen Province. Then, conduct the study by collecting data from research papers, interviews, small group meetings.

Stage 3: analyze and synthesize the obtained data to seek for knowledge by setting the main issues in education, organizing a Buddhist learning activity group and social studies in Khon Kaen with a focus on the participation of those who are involved in research. The data analysis is conducted based on the analytical induction. The researchers summarize the occurrence of phenomena and summarize the issues defined in accordance with the questions related to Buddhist learning activities, social studies, religion and culture together with using the descriptive method to explain general information.

The statistics used were: Mean, Percentage, Frequency and Standard Deviation; while the data interpretation has been performed by using the evaluation criteria and the content analysis is the same descriptive content analysis as the first method, but it is for processing and summarizing

the information obtained from documents and information technology, including interviews, discussion groups and observation. The presentation of information will be in the form of Descriptive Presentation.

Research Results

1) The state of the Buddhist learning process in DSRC

The Buddhist learning process is divided into 2 activities, namely:

1.1) Learning activities according to the curriculum are divided into 4 steps as follows:

Step 1: Leading, the studied schools provide a suitable place for the Department of Social Studies, Religious and Culture for teaching, ease of use, beauty, modernity and cleanliness. The schools also arrange the innovative and technological media in the classroom, research and teaching materials, submitting work through technology, as well as arranging the classroom in accordance with the teaching activities to suit the learners in order to allow students to participate and understand learning. The students practice meditation and perform chanting before entering the lesson. The students pray in the morning during the queue after respecting the national flag and before every class. Students spend 3-5 minutes for meditation and are introduced a method of Breath-Focus Mediation, simply designed and applied.

Step 2: Teaching, the teachers prepare both contents and teaching materials. The learning measurement results showed that the teaching content and teaching materials are prepared every session to guide teaching and learning with the content coverage. The teachers prepare the website, PowerPoint, pre-assignment, materials, both positive and negative sample videos, and submit the evaluation results of students in 3 aspects from the learning process: knowledge, skills and attitude towards subject content. The students were organized, concentrated, and studied the subject intently. It is found that the nature of the social studies course, the students thought that the course was boring, not fun, but when the teachers tried to organize a variety of activities so the students felt relaxed and gradually dissolved their behavior, concentrating happily. The students are more willing to study, have more

knowledge, develop themselves more. Morality and ethics have evolved and become more acceptable to families, society and communities. The use of the Buddhist principles for reason and practice makes the students disciplined and interested in learning. Teachers use question-driven stimulation to bring students to think about current events, integration creates intentions in the content taught. There are few students who do not concentrate on their studies due to other factors such as staying up late, playing on the phone in the class. They were suggested to focus and improve oneself. The teachers have a variety of teaching activities/ methods depending on the topic that focuses on analysis, use real questions or situations to create knowledge to encourage students to do research, ask questions, use multimedia and activities, learning in a cooperative group to encourage students to think, act, research, analyze and discuss results together, using techniques in a variety of formats such as Back Word-Design in order to bring out the concept. For the activities and practice with emphasis on learning responsibility for the work, it was found that practice activities were organized with emphasis on the students taking responsibility and make sacrifices, organize activities in a cooperative way, using Friends help friends techniques, provided activities to establish self-responsibility both the practice and the refining of etiquette, discipline, and morality should be instilled in the emphasis on the responsibility of everyone to work together. Students know that the scores are obtained from the overview of the group because doing the activities together with others requires responsibility for the actions and sacrifices.

Step 3: conclusion, in group assignments, the goal that teachers would like to have is that the students learn the work process and finally have results, and also learn, listen and participate in the assessment of learning results in a participatory manner. Students are able to analyze and discuss well together. Teachers and students collectively summarize their knowledge of the subject, summarize together so that they can gain knowledge that is new and different from their own. Teaching and learning process mostly will summarize the content after the course has been completed. The teachers summarize the key points and ask the students to apply. After the students

present their work in each group, the teacher and students summarize their knowledge together. It was found that students practice presentations in various forms such as presentation, labeling, supervision, presentation in the form of a project, etc. Students present work in front of the classroom. The teacher summarizes the subject matter and what can be applied to everyday life has always been summarized and suggested that students can apply it. In daily life, teachers can conclude with students in front of the class. Students can apply the knowledge gained to be used in daily life with family and people in society. It is the teacher's duty to bring the subject matter. Students should know how to summarize and emphasize in order to memorize, analyze, synthesize and compare. The teaching of gene management will be integrated. Therefore, every time in summing a lesson, students can be applied in daily life.

Step 4: evaluation, the summary of their own learning, it was found that the study was summarized according to the content taught in order to review the comprehension and assessment at all times in terms of interest, cooperation and pursuit of learning, having knowledge of knowledge and improving teaching and learning so as to prepare new knowledge to be used to teach students by the students to know themselves all the time. The students participated in the assessment themselves, both the behavior, the workpiece, the work, and improvement. It has been re-presented several times with close attention and care of parents, summarize after teaching in the learning management plan, collect scores to assess knowledge of students understanding, and students summarize their own learning by applying the sufficiency economy philosophy as the basis to improve further development. It was found that, teaching assessments such as observation, questioning, practice exercises, mid-semester exams, the final examinations to improve teaching and learning are evaluated according to the objectives of the subject group, and the self-teaching is summarized using pre- and post-study exams. Students have an assessment of every teaching time, recorded teaching results according to the lesson plan of each period and present to the head of the subject group.

1.2 Extra-curricular activities, it is found that extra-curricular activities encourage students to pursue knowledge, fully show their knowledge and ability, be assertive, know the right circumstances, abide by proper social etiquette, respect the rules, and be athletic. As an extension of the experience, knowledge skills, the development of personality, health, as well as morality and ethics for the students consisted of 1) pray and practice meditation every day of the activities to develop students' manners; 2) pray in the morning; 3) quality of life camp activities / camps virtue / Buddhist child camp for students annually; 4) Dharma listening and practice activities on important Buddhist days; 5) activities of offering candles; 6) encourage students to study and do Dhamma examination in different levels: 7) annual Dhamma practice.

2) The results of the creation of MBLA for DSRC

Learning activities, social studies, religion, and culture, it is found that there are 3 important activities as follows:

1) Cultivating righteousness, the steps are as follows: 1.1) organize good external factors, that is, a good physical environment and social environment by providing classrooms, facilitating and encouraging learning; 1.2) practice critical thinking, that is to teach students to focus on training students to think systematically, analyze, don't judge things only because they have seen it. There are steps that are: (1) thinking or considering by intrigue, that is, thinking correctly, (2) thinking in the right way, thinking systematically. There are steps or sequences of continuous thinking that can be linked from content to practice, (3) logical thinking, thinking by searching by the relevance of cause and factor which can be thought of in 2 ways: from the cause to the result and from the result to find the cause, (4) the use of ideas to produce desirable effects, such as thinking of ways that will cure anger, consciousness, or strengthening of the mind, etc.

2) The training according to the principles of the Trisikkha [7]. There are 3 important principles: 2.1) **Adhisīlasikkhā**: the study of the relationship with the material and social environment. It is the development of relationships with objects, called 'Kāya-bhāvanā or Physical Development', and the development of relationships with human beings

called 'Sīla-bhāvanā or Moral Development'; 2.2) **Adhicittasikkhā** [7]: educational institutions provide the Buddhist activities such as wearing white shirts, making merit and listening to sermons, having vegetarian food at lunch and so on. This includes the development of morality, goodness, mental performance, strength, perseverance, mindfulness, concentration, happiness, freshness and joyfulness, called 'Citta-bhāvanā'; 2.3) **Adhipaññāsikkhā** [7]: administrators, teachers and students have cooperated and promoted the Buddhist way and understand the group's Buddhist learning activities in DSRC for instances, they have faith in the use of principles in Buddhism, understanding of culture, Buddhist integration with teaching and learning. This is the development of knowledge and understanding, emphasizing the actual knowledge, called 'Citta-bhāvanā'.

3) The development according to the principle of the Four Bhāvanā Dhammas (Development) [8] consists of: 3.1) Kāya-bhāvanā which is the development of the body to be strong, disease-free, healthy and, most importantly, the development of relationships with physical environment; 3.2) Sīla-bhāvanā means the development for the behavioral betterment and discipline; 3.3) Citta-bhāvanā means developing the mind with: mental quality, capacity and health; 3.4) Paññā-bhāvanā means to create wisdom to have knowledge and understanding of things according to reality.

3. Evaluation of MBLA

3.1) The assessment results of the expert opinion on MBLA indicates that the overall mean value of the expert opinion on MBLA's appropriateness was at the highest level. All studied aspects of MBLA were at the highest level. Almost all aspects were found to have \bar{x} of 5.00 and S.D. of 0.00.

3.2) Experts are of the opinion that MBLA is helpful at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 5.00$, S.D.= 0.00). The usefulness of MBLA in all studied aspects was at the highest level (\bar{x} of 5.00, S.D.= 0.00).

3.3) Parents and the community were satisfied with the behavior of the students at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. =.59). The top 3 mean of the studied items were: good-hearted and virtuous, ethical, and able to work with others effectively

($\bar{x} = 4.79, 4.61, 4.59$, S.D.= .45, .59, .61) respectively.

V. Discussion

There were 3 procedures of MBLA for Social Studies, Religion and Culture Department as follows:

5.1) The result of Sammādiṭṭhi instillation was found that for learning activity arrangement based on the development of MBLA, teachers had to apply Sammādiṭṭhi Dhamma (Right View) factors at first: 1) external factors arrangement (Paratoghosa), it is to have good physical and social environment and good friendship; 2) right thinking practice (Yonisomanasikāra), it is to give correct and systematic attention that Sammādiṭṭhi occurred because when it appeared, there would be a bright path for practicing in consonance with Sikkhāttaya (the Threefold Learning). As mentioned, it conformed to the work of Phra Dithawat Aphiwatthano (Thipphun) [2] 'Buddhist Methods of Teaching and Learning in Social Studies Religion and culture Secondary level of Khon Kaen Municipality School', reporting that teachers should have integrated teaching with environment, society, culture and local wisdom in current states in order that students could apply in them in real life as well as 21st century learning management. Thus, 21st century learners' environment should be beneficial that learners used the right ways to learn flexibly, for instance, seeing, thinking, matching, listening, searching, talking, teamworking, interacting with friends, and self-access learning in several styles, e.g., classroom adjustment, thinking separation and approaching necessary learning material. Furthermore, there were three styles of various appropriate surroundings for learners: learning concentration, cooperative working, and project performance. Schools should also aim at learners' different activities. For example, learners might work at home, in studio, community, school learning court, or private library or they could choose learning and working places as group members' needs, which contained whiteboard, private working space, computer, camera, electronic board, teamworking area, and rest area in order to release stress. So, they could do activities in library and learners with the team would have wild space full of many chairs and

modern materials which connected them to teachers and others by wireless technology. For this reason, schools could create all their areas effective learning areas even the sidewalks, room corners with sofas, restrooms, canteens, gardens, stadiums, and so on. To add more ideas, schools could also decrease petitions in the classrooms which could see through to other spaces as if being company, art hall, book store, or coffee café. That could be built with transparent glasses in order that other students, parents, people, teacher, and school administrators could see that there were students working freely together with teachers who performed like project managers.

5.2) The result of self-culture in accordance with Sikkhāttaya was found that there were three key principles: 1) Adhisīlasikkhā was to practice in material and social relations, 2) Adhicittasikkhā is the method to train mind such as morality, goodness, mental condition, strength, attempting, concentration, consciousness, happiness, freshness, delightfulness. Citta-bhāvanā is the cultivation of the heart, and 3) Adhipaññāsikkhā is to create wisdom and understanding focusing on certain knowledge or its reality called 'Paññā-bhāvanā'. In Buddhism, good life is life of education and training for human-being: therefore, human should develop oneself until the life gets complete with Paññā (good thinking, speaking, and action). Self-training principle is to develop oneself in three parts: 1) behavior development, called 'Sīla', consisted of responsibility, volunteer, gratitude, punctuality, and discipline; 2) mental development, called 'Samādhi', consisted of intention, carefulness, and concentration; and 3) intellect development, called 'Paññā', consisted of knowledge management, and criticism. Those three mentioned were dependently related. Good behavior would be good to mental development and intellect growth, good mind also made people see how the reality would be. This is conformed to the study of Sri Phrai Chan Khiao [9] 'Learning Management of Buddhism by Buddhist Integrated Method' which compared western and Buddhist learning styles and reported effectiveness of the lesson was higher than the regulations and the comparison of learning outcome with Buddhist integration was higher than normal teaching. Therefore, the difference between those two ways were found that be statistically significant at a level of 0.01. The related study is that of Phrakhru

Phipitthammaphon (Bun Tan Srithong) 'Application of Buddha's Style of Teaching of Moral Teaching Monks in Schools at Phichit Province' [10], reported that to bring Buddha's four Buddhist teachings in teaching and learning: students could understand the lessons with Sandassanā way (elucidation and verification), students knew lesson values and practice with Samādapanā (incitement to take upon oneself), students had encouragement and be enthusiastic with Samuttejanā (urging; encouragement), and students had fun with Sampahamsanā (gladdening). Another related study is the study of Keyser [11], that showed the result of knowledge management in organization that it should have important main elements: knowledge management process, organisational cultures, investment, and technology use. Thud, horizon measurement of organization structure and knowledge management strategies were the most important element.

Recommendations

There are some recommendations in a study of MBLA in Social Studies, Religion and Culture Department as follows:

Recommendations for policy level: 1) Schools should adjust the curriculum to suit with student competency and use current issues and global changes. 2) Schools should accommodate modern technology materials in students' learning management. 3) Schools should have activities community and temples in order that students can participate activities and local traditions so that they can do self-learning from the reality.

Recommendations for using the result of the study: schools should apply Buddhist learning activities in Social Studies, Religion and Culture Department in curriculum administration conforming to a learning and teaching process in Social Studies, Religion and Culture Department.

Recommendations for the future study: the researcher should study innovation processes for Buddhist learning activities Social Studies, Religion and Culture Department.

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