



## LOCAL WISDOM MODEL IN SCHOOL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

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### Abstract

Thai local wisdom is the basic Thai bodies of knowledge inherited through learning processes, transfer, and development from one generation to the next. This type of local wisdom knowledge, if not conserved or transferred, may vanish with its owner. Thus, instructional management process in academic institutions is an important mechanism that drives forth the knowledge and local wisdom towards instruction and administration in schools. This research was aimed at analyzing the relationships of community contexts and studying the model for applying local wisdom in school's management of education. The Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques were used. The data was collected by in-depth interview, participatory observation, people's symposium, and AIC-based focus group discussion. The findings show that the local wisdom model in schools is viable through raising of consciousness in conservation of community's local wisdom. Activities involved can be project-based and knowledge management, with an emphasis on participation both at the school or community level. Or else, a model might call for participation from households, temples, and schools, where experts are invited to educate people on local wisdom. The local wisdom curriculum may be designed or a "local wisdom teacher" created, who can intervene in designing instruction, building good relations. The school can coordinate with community sages or leaders of local wisdom in different fields. These individuals should be regularly invited to educate students. Learning should be followed up and evaluated according to the local wisdom curriculum and concretely reflected to the community people. Then local wisdom can be developed and extended in the form of evident products or activities.

**Keywords:** Local Wisdom, Educational Management, Knowledge Management

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## Introduction

Thai local wisdom is a body of knowledge inherited from local people. It includes folk art and culture of each region in Thailand and is connected and related to the lifestyle and ways of living of people in the community. Hence, local wisdom is the important inheritance the community people should guard against, value highly, learn, transfer, and conserve through generations (Rung Kaewdaeng, 1999; Ratana Buason, 1990). Conservation and inheriting of local wisdom can be achieved by many ways. However, the possible method schools or institutions and community can do and learn is knowledge management which will draw tacit knowledge in individuals or community sages who own the local wisdom and reorganize it into explicit knowledge so that people in general are able to learn and retain the local wisdom (O'Dell, Carla, 1998; Prapon Phasukyued, 2007). The Office of Social Development and Human Security Standards (2006) noted that knowledge management in academic institutions is important for all circles. We can see that the past development up to now has seen new trends of development in all fields. This is the "dimension of sustainable development" which is considered by all sectors as the means of solution of problems in economic, demographic, environmental, technological, and social development dimensions. People can take part in decision making, auditing, or participating in different projects. The community will learn to solve problems, protect and develop their own society. These projects emphasize potentiality development of people and the underprivileged so that they are able to "think" and assist themselves

using the existing wisdom integratedly and selecting the biggest possible benefits that will be systematically distributed among all in the society (Bacha, 2000). Management of local wisdom through educational management processes or administration is hence a study commencing from the fact that an individual or a school has accumulated experiences or former knowledge and new learning skills or new bodies of knowledge. Then the outcomes and values obtained are continuously utilized. Existing resources are also used collaboratively by means of networks, database systems, development of storing and computation systems in the form of mixed media and a dissemination system via networks to which consumers have rapid access (Ekkawit Nathalang, 2003). This research emphasized the study and analysis of relationships of community contexts in order to determine a model for applying local wisdom in schools. As such, local wisdom will continue to exist through a transfer process made possible by education management, and, in the long run, the sustainable outcomes will be retained for the community people.

## Objectives

To analyze and find relationships of community contexts that will lead to management of knowledge and local wisdom in schools To study a model for applying knowledge and local wisdom in schools

## Methodology

This research emphasized the community as the basis (Community- Based Research). The conceptual research plan is illustrated in Figure 1:

## Phase I

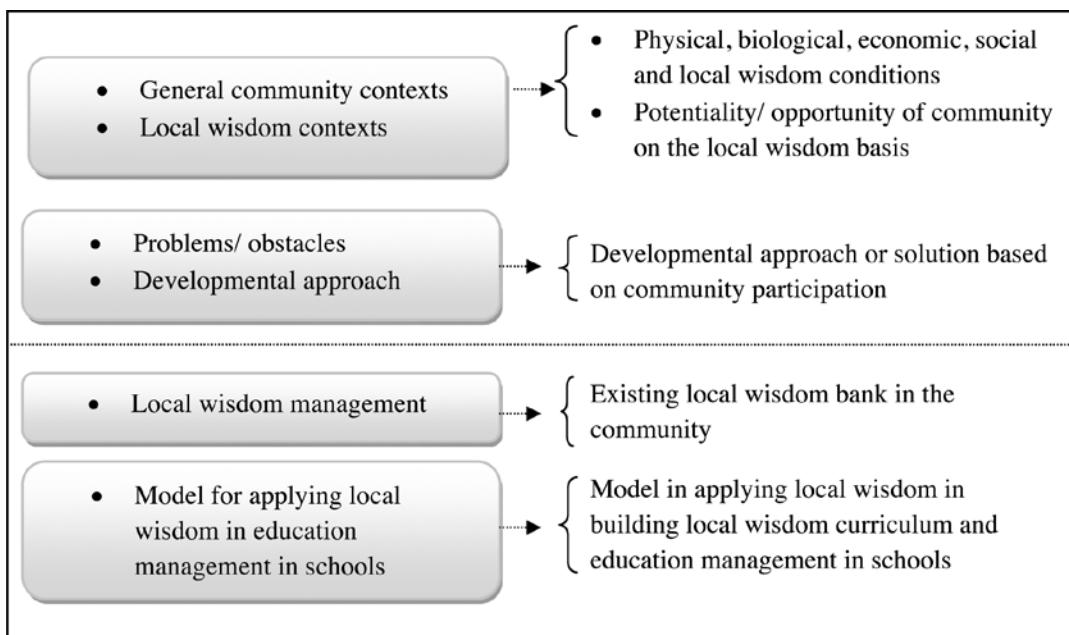


Figure 1 : The conceptual research plan

1.1 The community survey was conducted in Roi-et, Khon Kaen, Mahasarakham, and Kalasin in order to select a research- potential community which stood out as a representative place as far as local wisdom and research objectives were concerned. The Theoretical Selection method was applied and the community selected was Ban Khok Kung, Koh Kaew Sub-district, Selaphum District, Roi-et Province.

1.2 A brainstorming session was scheduled to inform participants of objectives and importance of local wisdom management based on community's resources (funds). The research core team was obtained consisting of one village head, one assistant to village head, a representative sage each in mat weaving, fishery, and agriculture, totaling 5 persons. The purposive selection was based on their qualifications as accepted leaders in the community and their consent in joining the research core team to conduct the research. They also became the core team in

knowledge sharing and research coordination. The target groups were established for data collection in different issues as stated in the research aim.

1.3 Preliminary community context analysis was carried out by means of the Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and the Village Walk techniques, which are the two major tools for community analysis (Passakorn Nantapanit, 2006). The results were the preliminary community information that enabled us to plan and make decision for research implementation.

1.4 The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was performed. PRA is a technique for community context analysis, which relies on the community people who participate in analysis and collecting of data (Passakorn Nantapanit, 2006). In the research, they joined the research core team and researchers in the analyses of community contexts, local wisdom context, locating potentiality and



opportunity for development under the joint community resources or funds.

1.5 A symposium was organized where the information from community contexts, potentialities, and opportunity contexts were retrieved and added on if not complete. Villagers participated in checking and analyzing their own community contexts for utmost accuracy. Problems were hence investigated and prioritized while the local wisdom required to be managed taken into account for knowledge management purposes; and as such, the knowledge would be retained as useful information for everyone and for the new generation to come.

1.6 The research team held a meeting to draw conclusions of the information, to construct tools for data collection, and to plan for the next steps of the research.

## Phase II

2.1 The research team work was informed of the research process, their assigned duties before data collection by means of in-depth interviewing, participatory observation, a knowledge management symposium to transfer tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, and proposal of the local wisdom model at the school.

2.2 The community symposium for retrieving and checking community information from knowledge management and sharing was organized.

2.3 The information was compiled to draw the conclusion related to the use of the local wisdom model at the school. This was achieved by asking the key informants that consisted of community leaders, teachers, school administrators and 4 representatives of local wisdom leaders in different fields. The community people had recommended the researchers who would best give information related to the community real contexts. The researchers asked for the readiness and willingness of the key informants before collecting information. Following this, the Focus Group Discussion was organized with 7 stakeholders of community development. The selection was based on purposive method through suggestions from community leaders and community people.

## Result and Discussion

1. The results of the analysis of relationships of community contexts can be concluded and shown in Figure 2:

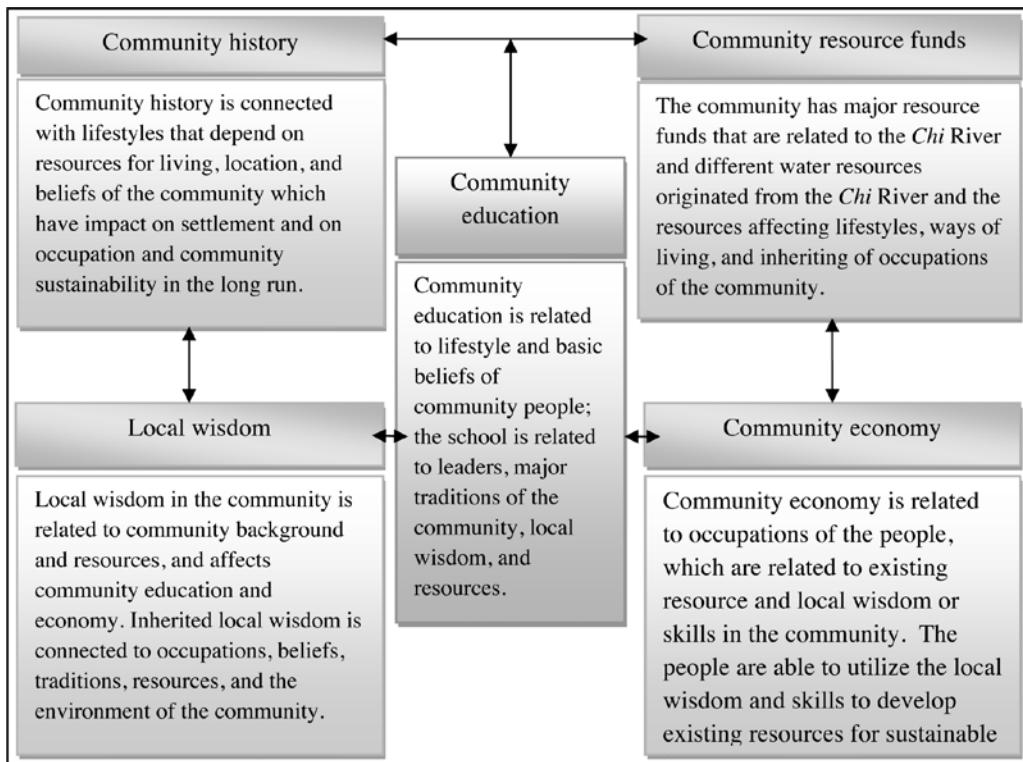


Figure 2 : The results of the analysis of relationships of community contexts

### 2. Application of the local wisdom model in the school

With reference to the application of local wisdom model in education management at the school, the researchers brainstormed ideas and organized a participatory symposium in order to determine a model that enables transfer of local wisdom in the community to the school. The following conclusions were drawn:

#### 1. Use of local wisdom in the school

In terms of policy, the school set a policy to develop a local wisdom curriculum to manage instruction in the school. The school did analyze and compile basic information related to

the community's local wisdom, but did not wholly systematize it. Therefore, local wisdom was incorporated in some subjects, e.g., Social Science and Our Locality. It was the information the teacher taught, while the teacher was sometimes not completely informed of the local wisdom. The information transferred was derived from textbooks or external media. Education management was not obtained from the area or from real practices. The content was only theoretical which was not specific of the community as the true areal context. Community information had not been fully utilized in instruction for the students. Another important issue was that instruction of the mentioned subjects did not involve the local wisdom teacher



or community sage in mat weaving for the transfer of knowledge. The school planned application of local wisdom in instruction, and placed this in the strategic plan to evidently apply or develop a local wisdom learning resource. The school's instruction incorporated local wisdom, and the local wisdom curriculum was being experimented on. This was still unsystematic with no clarified evaluation. Implementation was not continual as it should have been. Thus, local wisdom instruction was not successful as expected, even though the community leader was attentive and cooperated with the school in arranging local wisdom-related activities. However, many villagers, especially parents, still did not cooperate, not realizing the importance of the existing local wisdom. On the contrary, they expected the school to provide intensive education to their children.

## 2. Local wisdom that should be incorporated in school education

Following is the conclusion:

The local wisdom categories that should be incorporated in school education include agriculture, fishery, wickerwork, and mat weaving, the knowledge and resources of all of which exist in the community as the major inputs.

## 3. The local wisdom model for incorporating local wisdom in school education

The research team, villagers, administrators, teachers, and students joined in analyzing and making conclusion of the means to introduce local wisdom in the school by raising awareness and consciousness in conserving local wisdom in the community. The model could be participatory-based, project-based, knowledge management where participation is emphasized both at the school and community levels. Another model can emphasize cooperation between households – temple – school, and guest speakers can be invited to give a lecture on local wisdom and local wisdom curriculum design. This will create the community “local wisdom teachers”, who can assist in instruction. Good relationship will be enhanced while community sages or local wisdom leaders in different fields cooperate with the school, and are regularly invited to teach. Following-up and learning evaluation of the local wisdom curriculum should be carried out to concretely reflect the results to the community and stakeholders. Then the local wisdom knowledge would be extended to the creation of products or evident and concrete activities.

From above, the local wisdom model to be applied in school education can be drawn as shown in Figure 3:



### Use of local wisdom in schools

- School set policy to develop local curriculum and instruction.
- Basic data of evident local wisdom at Ban Khok Kung was analyzed.
- Education was planned using local wisdom in instruction.
- A local wisdom curriculum was developed but has never been truly used and evaluated.
- The community did not quite realize the importance of the use of local wisdom curriculum in school's instruction.

### Local wisdom that should be incorporated in school's instruction

- Local wisdom in agriculture – since the area is fertile with sediment from the *Chi* River
- Local wisdom in fishery – owing to the areal topography surrounded by the *Chi* River and hence adequate water resources for fishery
- Local wisdom in wickerwork – The community forest contains a lot of bamboos and the community people know well how to do wickerwork.
- Local wisdom in mat weaving from 'kok' - *Kok* can be found in great quantities around the *Chi* River basin and the community women know how to weave mats with beautiful patterns.
- Local wisdom in farming lay ducks – since the water resources and rice fields are suitable for duck farming. Such conditions support high quality and great number of eggs.

### Application of local wisdom in school instruction

- Build awareness and consciousness in conservation of community local wisdom by means of participatory projects both at the school and community levels, or participatory activities among households, temple, and school
- Invite guest speakers to talk about local wisdom and design the local wisdom curriculum
- Create "local wisdom teachers" of the community to assist in knowledge management
- Build good relations and participation between the school and community sages or different local wisdom leaders, and invite them to share knowledge regularly.
- Follow-up and evaluate the results of the local wisdom curriculum and instruction, and concretely reflect the results to the community people
- Develop and extend local wisdom knowledge into products or activities.

Figure 3 : the local wisdom model to be applied in school



## Conclusion

The holistic conceptual framework of this research was based on participation in the transfer of tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge which can be learned by anyone. An emphasis was placed and strengthened on the learning power of the community so that the people would brainstorm and share ideas to create evident bodies of knowledge. The community and the core research team have achieved the following operations: 1) analysis of the relationships of the community's physical, biological, economic, and social contexts; 2) determining a local wisdom model for school instruction using the participatory process. Knowledge management is a technique that allows sharing and exchanging of knowledge while tacit knowledge is being drawn. Thus, each informant had a very high self-esteem to be considered an important person or someone knowledgeable of the local wisdom, and someone who is ready to transfer the wisdom to the public. The outcome is not only "idealism", but the "real life; of the community and school. We would like to recommend the following issues for further research and for learning and utilization of knowledge in the future:

1. Knowledge management should be continuous, should be followed-up and evaluated regularly. What is important is that a good technique should be used to concretely extract the knowledge as much as possible for profound learning.

2. It is vital to create learning individuals in the community. It is an important target that will retain the body of knowledge into the future

3. Community study emphasized participatory processes as the important element because ultimately, the community will have to inevitably face the outcomes of the education and development. The traditional and classical concepts in community appraisal, i.e., mobilizing knowledge, resources, and power as much as possible, will be the only way to attain success in implementation and in sustainable self-dependence of the community. As such, learning will ultimately occur within individuals, networks, and community. The school and educational processes are very important in propelling bodies of knowledge in the community towards development of the community of practice. Learning can also be modified and the Professional Learning Community (PLC) created in the school as the support in driving community local wisdom towards the sustainability level. Then, the community and the people can stand on their own with the learning outcomes and skills well appraised (Reeves, 2011).

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