

Role of Teachers Toward the Transition into ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) In the Bangkok Metropolitan Area¹

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Abstract

This research study intends to (1) study the problems and obstacles of the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community, and (2) study and propose alternatives to determine the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community. This paper is a qualitative research with tools comprising of interviews that are semi-structural as well as semi-nonstructural. The results show that: (1) the domestic context i.e. obstacle in the ability to communicate internationally, the problem of state policies and strategies relating to AEC that cannot truly connect with the role in the teaching profession, in addition to regarding the determination of policies by the state, and the international context i.e. various limitations, problems in transferring teachers, obstacles in gaining acceptance with the difference of religion, culture and values including historical conflicts since in the past as well as legal and regulatory complications. (2) should be development and support to learn new languages and agreement towards the multi-cultural society and increase capabilities of the teaching professionals, increase teacher's knowledge on AEC and to live together on the differences. Teachers are leaders on wisdom and good spirits. Innovative communication technology should be used as tool and as means of communication for study and exchange of experiences. The important policy must also be for cooperation between educational institutions at the AEC level to plan production and development so that people will be with quality and at the amount produced sufficiently in line with the requirement of the product and service sector in this region.

Keywords: role of teaching professionals (teachers); ASEAN Economic Community (AEC); Bangkok Metropolitan

Introduction

“Teaching Professionals” or “Teachers” have an important duty to manage knowledge and develop learners in every way. The “Teaching Profession” or Professional in the Educational Area”, according to the 2003 Teaching Council and Educational Personnel Act, should be profession in goodness and are capable people in the society, especially teachers in Thai society, since teachers are expected to be role models of goodness and morality to children. Therefore, teachers must stand to morals in living one's life and behave in line with standards and conducts of their profession so the way teachers live their lives can lead the Thai society to the appropriate direction. Furthermore, teachers must constantly learn and develop their expertise in terms of knowledge, techniques and method of teaching on top of being well disciplined to be loved and respected by all. They must be kind, merciful, honest, polite, have tolerance, and be willing to sacrifice. Children will see and take them as an example. This results in the main mission of teachers to be providing education to children to become a well-comprehensive human beings as intended in the 1999 National Education Act. ASEAN and countries of South East Asia, being

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cooperative units in the region, being created since 1967 and existing up until present, has increased the member countries from only 6 countries to presently 10 countries consisting of Thailand, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia as former members, combined with Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam as additional members of ASEAN (International Relations Office, 2011: 2). Because Thailand having been the Chairman of ASEAN, we give importance to intense action in accordance with the ASEAN Community Establishment Plan, especially the rapid economic unity as the main promotion growth of the region besides the decrease dependence on the fluctuating world economy, together with giving importance to developing the economy to have more equality amongst all other nations. There was an agreement for December 31, 2015 to be the official establishment date which ASEAN becomes a community.

Today, it is widely accepted that the improvement in human resources is the key to all development processes so human will grow with quality, but how much quality will be depend on how much has been learned so education is the most important tool to develop a country, especially Thailand that must improve on education standards to a better level so human capabilities will also improve fully. Humans must be trained to think, analyze, solve problems and initiate in accordance with the 1999 National Education Act (National Education Committee Office, 1999: 5).

For this reason, the researcher focuses on the subject of the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community to alert the role of teachers and to prepare education for learners to be with skills so they will be ready to fairly compete with countries of AEC. This paper details the problems, obstacles and methods to determine the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community. As for the role teachers toward the transition, this must be developed instantly. Bangkok Metropolitan is used as the sample area for this research to collect samples where teaching professional have the duty to develop their later generations to climb to the highest point of their life because teachers are the ones to plant the various knowledge, ideas and views in living each students' life. If the teaching and advice is good then it will benefit the country to develop as well. Upon entering into the ASEAN Community, there must be adjustment and change toward the target of Thailand's educational improvement and establishment of joint culture. As seen today, foreigners in this region is having more role in the business sector so it is obvious that English language is becoming more essential to communicate internationally for investment. Teachers must also improve their skills and pay attention to the transferring of knowledge to learners, bearing in mind that education must not be limited only to classrooms. Self-learning is very crucial. The roles and duties of teaching professionals therefore applies to all sectors and must develop in time for the combining of AEC for sustainability of this region.

Research Objectives

1. To study the problems and obstacles of the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community
2. To learn and propose alternatives to determine the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community

Literature Reviews

1. Theory relating to roles of teaching professionals

Intha Siriwan (2008: 3) refers to Venerable Buddhadas stating that "teacher" is a highly regarded word, the door opener of spirits then brings such spirits towards high morals,

purely about the minds and not involving materialistic. Teachers are educational personnel in educational institutions, from foundation all the way to degree level, having the main responsibility to manage teaching as intended by the learners and in accordance with the schedule of the educational institution in line with the set syllabus core with various different ways of management i.e. by way of Bars and others (Rattanawadee Jotikapanich, 2007: 25-27) that considers evaluation and predicting the effectiveness of teachers through the role of duty in 4 aspects namely (1) teacher as teaching administrators, (2) teacher as a friend, (3) teacher as a member in the school community, and (4) teacher as a member of the community of profession.

Teachers have an important role in education, no matter of being a role model in teaching to students but also in terms of morality as well as passing knowledge down to students without barrier, being a person who sacrifices for the public more than oneself and be a person who loves to teach since teaching is the heart of teachers, along with emphasizing on morality for students to stand on goodness, on top of being a person with good knowledge so teachers must constantly acquire new knowledge.

2. The role of duties and responsibilities of teaching professionals and teaching in the 21st century

The role of teachers must be alerted and be ready to manage knowledge to be ready to give to learners with the skills to live their life in the 21st century. The most important skill is the learning skill that focuses on knowledge, ability and required skill that shall be a result of the modification of the teaching system along with providing readiness in various aspects that will promote learning. In the present 21st century, “teachers” must not only teach but also become “coaches” as well.

Vicharn Panich (2013) refers to the theory of modern teaching mentioned from the book *How Learning Works* by Herbert A. Simon that (1) the former knowledge of each learner is very different so teachers must find these differences and fix it, (2) knowledge organization is important to learning so if teachers can organize knowledge, these knowledge can easily be brought to use, (3) motivation and inspiration is crucial so teachers must find their own style and create motivation and inspiration to learners, (4) for true knowledge, teachers must be the master in learning, (5) teaching through hands-on and feedback will result the learner in happiness and self-confidence to know on where to improve, (6) collaborative learning develops the learner and the atmosphere to emphasis on right-wrong but not affect the good learning of the learners, and (7) as for self-directed learning, teachers must practice to acquire the capability and skill in in self-directed learning where the world of learners will be created and re-created continuously through personal experience so teachers must apply “play to know” which is an important way to develop learning (Nawaporn Chalarukse, 2015), *Role of Teachers and Teaching in the 21st Century*: 65-70).

3. The policy and method to move education in ASEAN toward the target in establishing the ASEAN Community: AC in 2015, Thailand’s Ministry of Education has appointed a national committee to move education in ASEAN toward the target in establishing the ASEAN Community in 2015 that consists of representative from major organizations namely the Education Permanent Secretary Office, Education Council Secretariat Office, Basic Education Commission Office, Basic Vocation Commission Office, Higher Education Commission Office, representative from the Secretary-General of Teachers’ Council Office, Director the of ASEAN University Network and representative from the ASEAN Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and having the

Educational Minister as the Chairman, with roles, duties and working methods from related internal agencies to more education toward the ASEAN Community.

Higher education and the condition to unite ASEAN Community of the Higher Education Commission Office (OHEC) sees the importance of joining the ASEAN Community in 2015 according the ASEAN Charter which will bring about change both in the economy, politics, social and cultural, especially in education. All along, OHEC has determined the open trade and service in areas of higher education and sustainability. Becoming ASEAN Community, the fundamental factor is to set the 15-years framework for higher education, edition 2 for the higher education system to be ready to accommodate Thailand to become a part of the ASEAM Community.

Research Methodology

This study that researches on the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Community in the Bangkok Metropolitan area is an empirical study that deploys the qualitative research approach with semi-structured interview as well as non-structural that deepens study on the purposive selection selected from a group of 20 specialists to provide details, separated into 3 groups, namely administrators of educational institutes and people in the teaching profession both in state and public schools in the Bangkok Metropolitan area, and academics with good knowledge and understanding on the teaching profession namely administrators of the Teachers Council, operational staffs and related people.

Data collection

1. Primary data derives from the interview using the semi-structured interview as well as non-structural
2. Secondary data derives from analyzing relevant documents and related literature, including books, textbooks, publications, articles and news, and online sources from government agencies

Data analysis

Content analysis involves analyzing data collected from the survey, interviewing with key informants, Data was audio-recorded and photograph. All data was then validated with other information sources, and summarized the content analysis.

Research Result

1. The problems and obstacles of the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community in the Bangkok Metropolitan finds that:

1.1 The obstacle in lack of knowledge in international language that is considered to be the important tool in communication for understanding, learning and development because language is the important tool to all. There is still lack of promotion to see the importance of international language in the work at ASEAN level if language becomes the barrier and blocks the ability to communicate between the state officials along with organizations and various agencies that relate to the state and private.

1.2 The problem of state policies and strategies toward the ASEAN community that does not truly reach the role of teaching professionals because of lack of promotion to see the importance as Thailand is currently still not ready for the ASEAN Community with the various obstacles and limitations.

1.3 The problem of future transfers of teach professionals.



1.4 The obstacle in creating acceptance in the difference of religion, culture and values including the conflicting history since in the past which is a very important turning point especially in education so it is crucial to create understanding of each nation's culture. The difference in history is due to not thoroughly studying the history so in-depth learning is required not to flare conflicts nor hatred but to know the difference amongst the international cultures.

1.5 The obstacle in law and regulations and rules of ASEAN must be international because education is the root to all areas of development. Therefore, law and regulation must cover all limitations to not go overboard on moral conducts so it is compulsory to be equipped with readiness and knowledge to cope with the group of ASEAN Community countries upon joining the ASEAN Community.

Hence, the problems and obstacles can be summarized into 2 categories namely (1) the domestic context i.e. obstacle in the ability to communicate internationally and the promotion and determination of policies by the state, and (2) the international context i.e. the law that shall be enforce upon the ASEAN Community group and the gaining acceptance in the difference of religion, culture and values as well as the problem in transferring teaching professionals.

2. The approach to determine the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Economic Community in the Bangkok Metropolitan, studies finds that:

2.1 Way to develop and support learning new foreign languages and accepting the multicultural society, every sector must take part in the promotion to prepare for such skill, change of attitude and increase capability, prepare for readiness in language skills, enhance knowledge about ASEAN, improve knowledge of living with differences and open insights as well as teachers should lead in wisdom and good spirit.

2.2 Way to transform information technology and communication to become the tool and means of communication, learning and exchange of experiences together with improvement on education, work, development, adjustment of capability evaluation group to reflect efficiency, teaching management and advancement of quality through information technology and communication, in line with bringing innovation to also be used as a tool.

2.3 Way to support teachers in developing their capabilities in teaching i.e. the development of the teaching profession, control of the teaching profession to develop the production system and to develop quality teachers as well as the spirits of being teachers. The focus here is for teachers to be qualified in accordance to their line of studies and bringing in information technology to become an effective tool in teaching to assist teachers.

2.4 Establish agencies in areas of social community and ASEAN community with the state determining the important policies namely cooperating with educational institutions to plan production on development of quality human beings and at the amount consistent with the requirement of the productions and service sector.

Conclusion and Discussion

1. Problems and Obstacles

The problems and obstacles of the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Community in the Bangkok Metropolitan area find that the obstacle lies on the obstacle of being able to communicate internationally, corresponding with the article on English Language and the Move into the ASEAN Community by Nopporn Sarobol (2014: 1) which summarizes that in 2015, the various countries in ASEAN consisting of 10 nations, which are Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Lao, Myanmar and Cambodia, are combining

to become the ASEAN Community. This means that the people in each country shall communicate in every aspect no matter if in economics, social, politics, administration, education, cultural arts traditions, travelling, etc. with English as the central means of communication. Policies and strategies by the State relating to the ASEAN Community group corresponds with Wanida Harnnarong et al (2014) who indicated that ASEAN Charter in Section 34 which stipulates that “The working language of ASEAN shall be English”. Because of this, the education ground has been alerted and has very much prepared themselves to step into the ASEAN Community. Various educators have a widespread opinion on how to develop English usage to the young and Thai working groups. The focus was directed to all Thai civilians to be able to use English language to communicate effectively. Moreover, the problem of transfer of teaching professionals seem to increase the degree of seriousness. On top of that is the problem of acceptance of the difference in religion, tradition and values as well as the conflicts in history since in the past, the very important change, especially on education and the necessity to create understanding of each nation’s culture. History is different because we do not thoroughly learn about history so we must now do in-depth learning on to emphasize on the conflict or hatred but to understand the difference in international culture, consistent with Wanida Harnnarong et al (2014). Understanding the culture and traditions of each nation in the ASEAN Community and being interested to learn about movements of member nations of ASEAN that are more ready can be easily done since at present, news about moving into ASEAN Community as well as news on cultural arts are abundant. Moreover, universities have royal cultural arts institute which displays about the culture of various nations that at equivalent in ASEAN together with the language institutes that make people quite ready. Last but not least is the obstacle of knowing the law, rules and regulations which is the foundation to development in all areas. Therefore, the law and regulation must have a good coverage of control not to allow performance of moral misconduct so preparation and knowledge must be equipped to support the combining of the ADEAN Community group into becoming the ASEAN Community.

2. Ways to determine roles

As for the ways to determine the role of teaching professionals toward the transition into ASEAN Community in the Bangkok Metropolitan area, study finds that the way in developing and supporting knowledge of foreign languages and the acceptance of the multicultural society, all sectors must take part in supporting the skill , adjusting the attitude and increasing the capability. This involves development in the use of information technology and communication as the tool and channel to communicate, learn and exchange of experiences. The teachers must be qualified to teach on information technology and know about the appropriate tool to be used for teaching as an instrument to help teachers self-teach, in line with Aim-on Lohit, Ponthip Worakul, Sombut Rittidej (2015). Having knowledge about members of the ASEAN Community can create new innovation in teaching. The ability to transform context of ASEAN and other group of subjects is at mid-level on the scale of high to low. The top 3 are the ability to exchange experience of learning within the ASEAN member nations, tthe ability to use techniques and methods to various teachings as well as applying electronic media (ICT) to help arrange teaching. And the environmental factors which stands at high level on the scale of high to low, which can be further classed down into 3 topic namely on the source of knowledge and the consistency with the work of Sompong Jitradub (2012) that researched on the development and production of personnel to accommodate the demand of the 2015 opening free of ASEAN. Here, studies found that state teachers, directors of educational institutions, directors of educational area offices, university

lecturers and students of up to 70-80% have very little to no knowledge about moving into ASEAN. As for the establishment of the agency on social community of culture of ASEAN, the State ranks this policy as important. That is, the cooperation of educational institutions to produce and develop human with quality and at the amount as required in the production and service area, along line with the work of Aim-on Lohit, Ponthip Worakul, Sombut Rittidej (2015) which state that the present condition of managing education toward entering into ASEAN Community of schools under the supervision of High School Education Office Area 21 that the management of each school is well prepared no matter if in terms of the vision to prepare education toward ASEAN Community and the readiness in forming a committee of teachers responsible for the development of knowledge towards ASEAN Community for both teachers and students.

Suggestions

1. The first recommendation from this study is upon determining any topic, consideration must be on the basis of the context and facts. Upon bringing into practice, clear communication is required with acceptance and courage to make change. The scope of vision of the profession must also broaden to see the direction of quality development for learners.

2. Teaching profession creates personnel for the society so teachers ae to teach knowledge, principle of thinking, the practical aspects and methods to work to the students. Every country in ASEAN has knowledge so by steeping into ASEAN, teachers must continually broaden their knowledge and efficiency, that is bring acquired knowledge to pass on to students for thorough understanding and making them able to adapt these knowledge in real life.

3. Leaders must be good role models and samples for students to develop and change toward learning, including the practice of English in communication and adapting as possibly can to activities.

4. Related offices involved in the joining into the ASEAN Community i.e. Teachers Council and Office of the Welfare Promotion Commission for Teachers and the network of Teaching Professionals be ready according to ASEAN teacher's standards. These related offices should prepare an ASEAN course that sustains with the core courses for promotion and exchange of knowledge of teachers with ASEAN.

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