

*The Development of Teachers' Skills of Buddhist Instruction for Schools
Affiliated with the Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under
the Royal Project*

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to study the problems of teaching in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project of Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon, to develop teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model, and to survey teachers' and students' satisfaction toward teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model. The target group consisted of 221 teachers teaching in the academic year 2014 at 20 schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project of Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon. The participating teachers in the study were chosen by purposive sampling. The instrument of the research was comprised of lesson plans based on Buddhist Instruction Model, an evaluation form to evaluate teachers' teaching skills, a questionnaire on teachers' satisfaction, and a questionnaire on students' satisfaction toward Buddhist Instruction Model. The data were quantitatively analyzed applying the statistical tools of average and standard deviation, and they were qualitatively studied by observing behaviors. Findings revealed the following: First, the problems of teaching in these 20 schools were found in three aspects which were inefficient teaching activities, lack of knowledge in using teaching aids: media, innovation and technology in teaching, and lack of inclusive measurement and evaluation. Second, the experts rated the development of teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model the most appropriate at the highest ranking ($\bar{X}=5.00$). Third, teachers' satisfaction toward the development after the implementation of Buddhist Instruction Model was at high level ($\bar{X}=3.55$), higher than before the implementation which was at the average level ($\bar{X}=2.59$). Fourth, students' satisfaction toward teachers' teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model was at high level.

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Rationale

While accompanying His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen to visit their citizens in the remote areas throughout Thailand during her childhood, Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon saw the way of living of these people and realized that they had a lot of problems such as poverty, lack of food and other basic needs, lack of services in public health, and education. Since then Her Royal Highness Princess has made a strong determination to help her people. She started her developmental project in A.D. 1980, initiating agricultural project for lunch in three border patrol police schools so as to solve the problems of lacking food and to improve children's health and nutrition in the rural areas. After that, the project was expanded in other aspects and in larger areas to improve citizens' good quality of life. Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon established the Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon to join with other organizations to take charge in administering the Royal Project.

This developmental project was initially implemented in schools. If there was no school in any rural area, Her Royal Highness Princess would set up a learning center or a community school to do activities so as to improve the quality of life of people through the process of education. After the development expanded to the community, the project would be carried out with the following rules. (1) To be self-reliant emphasizing that everyone has to help themselves before asking help from others. (2) To have participation focusing on those people who receive benefits from the project taking part in thinking, planning, and doing. This helps those involved feel that they are the owners who learn and understand what they are doing. (3) To go through the whole process of learning and development emphasizing development in all aspects together. (4) To develop coordinating and cooperating system from all parties. (5) To equip teachers and workers with knowledge and skills so that they are efficient to perform their task through training, attending workshops and seminars, having study visits so they can exchange ideas, and apply what they learn for implementation. (6) To conserve environment and maintain regional culture and tradition.

The administration of the Royal Project of Her Royal highness Princess Sirindhon is under the responsibility of Border Patrol Police Bureau involving 183 border patrol schools in 38 provinces throughout Thailand, 178 elementary schools in 22 provinces under the Office of the National Primary Education Commission, the learning center of Chao Thai Pukhao Community "Mae Fah Luang" and 266 community learning centers under the Department of Non-Formal Education, 15 private schools for Islamic religion under the Office of Private Education Commission, 30 child development centers in the provinces of Sakon Nakhon, Nan, and Tak, 7 schools under Local Government Promotion Department, 39 Tripitaka schools of General Education Division in the provinces of Nan, Phrae, and Chiangrai under National Buddhism Office, and 27 schools in Bangkok Metropolitan Area. Conclusively, the administration of the Royal Project covers 745 schools throughout Thailand. (Information of Academic Year 2009)

Now, many more schools under the Royal Project are well-established. Nevertheless, teachers in these schools still lack skills in teaching. Some of them are not qualified because the schools aim their teachers to be equipped with good knowledge and good morals. On the parts of learners, students are not mature in manner and conduct to lead their lives properly. They need to develop stable mind and wisdom to become a

good man. However, some schools do not instill much moral and ethic to the students and there is also lack of qualified teachers to integrate knowledge and skills in their teaching. Therefore, some schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area failed to meet the targeted aim in the instruction.

From the above-mentioned problems, the Buddhist Instruction Model will be proposed to increase teachers' skills in their teaching. The teachers can efficiently help students to learn and practice good conduct. Their mind and wisdom will be cultivated to be stable and wise. The Buddhist Instruction Model will enable teachers to direct their teaching to the principle of Dhamma. Students will be taught in good environment and friendly atmosphere which will facilitate their problem-solving skills. They will learn to seek their knowledge in a whole-process integration of learning through Trisikkha (Threefold Learning) involving the studies of morality, concentration and wisdom.

Five stages of instruction through Trisikkha are the following.

Stage 1 Confidence Development

This stage prepares students to have confidence that what they are going to learn is beneficial and practical and that teachers are trained professionally to have good rapport to learners.

Stage 2 Virtue Development

This stage involves both teachers and students to set agreement in the instruction. Students are divided into groups suited for activities and there is an arrangement for teaching aids, media and learning resources to facilitate learning.

Stage 3 Wisdom Development

In this stage, students practice Buddhist way of thinking (Yonisomanasikara) through learning activities. They learn to seek and search for knowledge, do experiments, participate in group discussion, and make presentation after doing activities.

Stage 4 Improvement and Implementation

In this stage, students adapt and improve their projects. They have discussions to apply knowledge and experience to solve problems in real life situations enabling them to make use of the project for their own and others' benefits.

Stage 5 Conclusion and Evaluation

This stage encourages students to summarize what they have learned, evaluate and display projects, and exchange what they have learned about Buddhist principles through singing activities, task or project evaluation, doing exercises, taking tests, or collecting assigned tasks in portfolios. (Kittichai Suthasinobon. 2010: 65-69).

If teachers can write lesson plans and arrange activities as suggested in Buddhist Instruction Model, students will achieve the targeted goals. From the above-mentioned rationale, the researcher is interested in developing the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project of Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon so that teachers in these schools will have sustainable development enabling them to adapt and update themselves to the ever changing

environment. Then they can be the best resourceful teachers to strategically develop Thai people to live in the sustainable and learning society as announced in the Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (A.D. 2012-2016)

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the problems of teachers' teaching in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project.
2. To develop the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers teaching in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project.
3. To investigate teachers' satisfaction toward the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model.
4. To survey students' satisfaction toward the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model.

Research Procedure

The researcher conducted this research in four stages based on Kemmis, and McTaggart's framework (Kemmis, and McTaggart, 1990: 53-90) as the following.

Stage 1

Reconnaissance. The researcher investigated and studied essential information to design the framework so as to develop the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project.

Stage 2

Planning. After stage 1, the researcher designed a drafted copy of Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers in these affiliated schools.

Stage 3

Acting and observing. The researcher conducted an experimental teaching using Buddhist Instruction Model through the stages of doing class activities, testing and evaluating, studying problems and obstacles, and assessing the efficiency of teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model.

Stage 4

Reflection. The researcher evaluated all stages of experimental teaching to collect quantitative and qualitative data and made recommendations for the improvement of the deficiency. Then the researcher developed Buddhist instruction Model into a comprehensive version as a teaching model for teachers in the targeted schools.

Research Result

Findings of the research showed the following.

1. There were problems found in three aspects: inefficient teaching activities, lack of knowledge and skills in using teaching aids: media, innovation and technology in teaching and inconclusive testing and evaluation.
2. The experts rated the development of teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model at the highest level. The teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model consisted of five stages: confidence development, virtue development, wisdom development, improvement and implementation, conclusion and evaluation.
3. Teachers' satisfaction toward the teaching skills after the implementation of Buddhist Instruction Model was at high level ($\bar{X}= 3.55$), higher than their satisfaction before the implementation which was at the average level. ($\bar{X}= 2.59$)
4. Students' satisfaction toward teachers' teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model was at high level.

Summary of Research Result

The development of teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers in school affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project can be summarized as the following.

1. Problems in teaching

1.1 In regard to teaching activities, it was found that teachers had problems following the sequence of instructional plans. Besides, they could not organize varied teaching activities for students, especially those which focusing on the thinking skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, creative thinking, etc. Furthermore, their teaching activities did not allow students to practice self-studying, data-collecting, and researching for new knowledge. Teachers also could not provide students with interesting learning atmosphere which would enable them to study enthusiastically and happily, nor could they arrange activities to develop students' potentials and desirable traits.

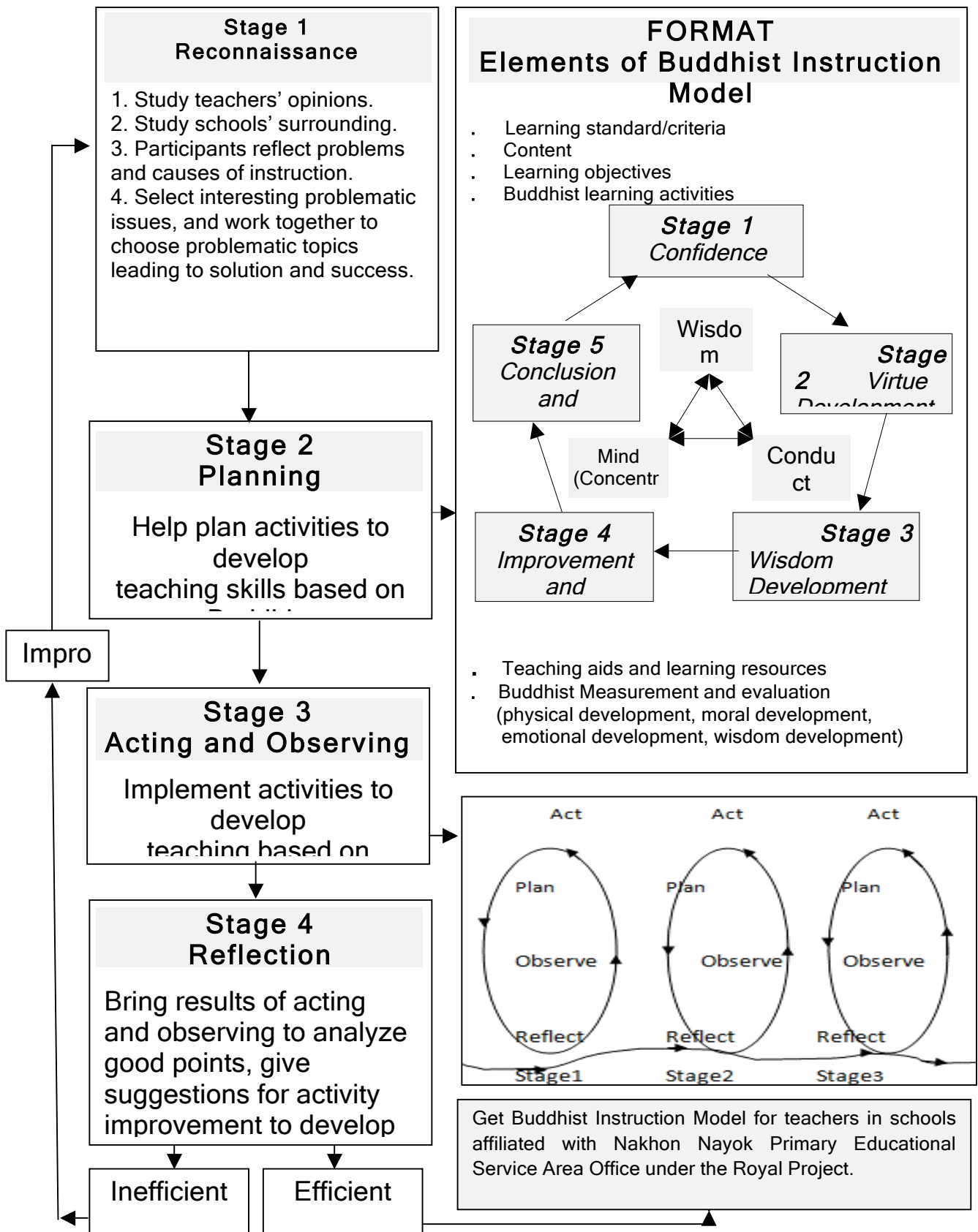
1.2 With regard to the use of teaching aids: media, innovation and technology, it was found that teachers did not realize the necessity of using teaching aids because they did not have knowledge or understand anything about them. Therefore, they could not use teaching aids to do instructional activities, nor could they produce teaching aids themselves. In addition, they did not know how to choose appropriate teaching aids to suit the objectives and content of the lessons. Furthermore, the teaching activities as suggested in the lesson plans did not provide sufficient innovative teaching materials and updated technology to meet the needs of instruction, and the teachers themselves could not develop teaching aids to suit and correspond to teaching activities.

1.3 Regarding testing and evaluation, it was found that teachers did not really know how to evaluate students' performance. Ways to test and evaluate students were not varied and did not correspond to standard, criteria, and learning activities. Learners had no parts in evaluating themselves, and there were no proper criteria to evaluate tasks and loads of teaching.



Picture 1 shows the actively in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project.

2. In regard to the development of teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service under the Royal Project of her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhon, the experts rated that this instruction model was the most appropriate. The development of the model is illustrated in Picture 2 as follows.



Picture 2 shows the pattern/format of development of teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model. From Picture 2, the details can be shown as the following.

(Kittichai Suthasinobon. 2012)

2.1 Learning standard is the requirement set for qualifications and desirable quality in education to be used as a benchmark for quality control, investigation, assessment, evaluation, and educational quality assurance

2.2 Indicator is the behavior required for what students must know and what they can do or perform. It is characteristics or permanent personal behavior.

2.3 Content includes concepts and principles sequentially arranged so that learners can learn continuously. These concepts are standardized and included for course content in each level of education.

2.4 Learning objectives are the parts that show the learning outcome of students who were taught through Buddhist Instruction Model. The measurable characteristics of students are having good conduct (morality), having stable mind (concentration), having good knowledge and good thinking as well as knowing how to manage the knowledge obtained (wisdom).

2.5 Content is the knowledge that students must learn and master.

2.6 Learning activities are teaching procedure that based on the teaching of Buddha encouraging students to seek knowledge, solve problems, or search for knowledge by themselves. Teachers provide friendly environment and learning atmosphere through Trisikkha that students have been trained in conducting their manners. They learn morality, concentration or mind development to have endurance in learning and enjoy the learning, and wisdom which comprises true knowledge enabling them to think and solve problems systematically (Yonisomanasikara). The procedure of learning consists of five stages as the following.

Stage 1 Confidence development

This stage involves teachers' preparation to build up students' confidence by convincing students that what they are learning will be beneficial to themselves and others. Examples of learning activities are praying to concentrate, doing meditation, talking and making inquiries, discussing and asking questions.

Stage 2 Virtue development

This stage involves teachers and students participating in discussion and setting agreement in learning. Students are divided in groups to suit the content of the lessons and activities. Teachers prepare teaching aids, media and learning resources appropriate for learners in the twenty-first century.

Stage 3 Wisdom development

In this stage, students do activities using Buddhist ways of thinking (Yonisomanasikara) in studying. They seek knowledge, do experiments, search for information, solve problems through The Four Noble Truths using team teaching and team learning, fieldwork, data collection, data recording, discussion, and presentation.

Stage 4 Improvement and Implementation

In this stage, students improve their projects aiming for good quality. They also inform how to apply knowledge and experience they have learned to solve problems in real life situation, or they will do more projects.

Stage 5 Conclusion and Evaluation

Students summarize what they have learned, evaluate, present their projects, and exchange what they have learned to relate with religious principles through the activities of singing, evaluating tasks, doing exercises, taking tests, or collecting tasks into portfolio.

2.8 Teaching aids and learning resources are materials, instruments, and methods used to help develop and improve teaching such as learning resources, textbooks, websites, readymade lessons, or e-books, etc.

2.9 Measurement and evaluation are done in 4 aspects: observing learning behavior (physical development), testing social skills (moral development), testing emotional behavior (emotional development), and measuring the achievement of learning (wisdom development).

2.10 Teachers recorded their teaching performance to see whether they met the targeted goal or not. Then they consider what has to be done to improve their teaching, and give recommendations for the next teaching.

2.11 Recommendations are part of the instruction that teachers record, take notes, and observe while they are teaching. After their teaching, teachers make comments, give limitations and recommendations so that they can efficiently improve their teaching for future instruction.

3. The study on teachers' satisfaction toward the development of the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model revealed that teachers' satisfaction was at the average level ($\bar{X}= 2.59$) before the instruction, and their satisfaction was higher after the instruction ($\bar{X}= 3.55$).

4. Students' satisfaction toward the teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model was at high level.

Discussion

In conducting the research study on the development of teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model for teachers in schools affiliated with Nakhon Nayok Primary Educational Service Area Office under the Royal Project, the researcher found that the results of the study yielded interesting points worthy for discussion as the following.

1. The teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model comprised the characteristics to enhance students' learning behavior, so they learned efficiently. The experts evaluated that Buddhist Instruction Model was efficient and standardized, and it was rated at the average score of 5.00 which was considered very appropriate. The success of this teaching model might result from its unique characteristic of integrating the teaching skills based on Buddhist educational philosophy which students have already known the essence of what they learn. They are confident that they can apply the knowledge to use in their daily lives. Buddhist Instruction Model has built up knowledge and combined new experiences necessary for life corresponding to the needs and real life situation by integrating Buddhist principles

and sufficiency economy philosophy, all of which are the whole process and well-rounded development to mold each student to become a perfect man. Students were also taught and trained to have good conduct (morality), have strong mind determined to study (concentration), and use wisdom to solve problems appropriately (wisdom) through the teaching and learning process based on Buddhism (Trisikkha). All components of the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model are efficient and can really be used to develop students' learning effectively.

2. The study on teachers' satisfaction toward the development of teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model showed that Buddhist Instruction Model is a teaching process that teachers arrange to set conditions and prepare situations for students to learn and change behaviors required of them. Teachers help students to get knowledge, skills, values, ways of thinking and express themselves so that they can learn to reach the goal easily and efficiently. All of these will result in good development in learning behaviors, have good social skills, have satisfaction with learning and are enthusiastic to learn. Actually, there was a survey to investigate teachers' satisfaction toward the development of their teaching skills, and findings showed that after applying Buddhist Instruction Model to their teaching, the development was higher than before the experiment both in total teaching process and in each behavior. The higher satisfaction might result from the fact that the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model was distinctive. The learning process was based on Trisikka (the Threefold Learning) Principle through five stages of learning as follows: Stage 1: Confidence Development, Stage 2: Virtues Development, Stage 3: Wisdom Development, Stage 4: Improvement and Implementation, Stage 5: Conclusion and Evaluation. All these five stages bring in concepts, frameworks and principles based on Buddhism to integrate with other universal principles such as Piaget's learning from concrete objects to abstract. (Carin, 1997: 38-40 Cited in Piaget, 1965) and Bruner's learning through discovery. (Bruner, 1960:33) It has been mentioned that teaching teachers to learn and really understand, one has to use a proper approach and a good method of teaching. Teachers must arrange suitable learning experiences to match students' abilities, design the content of the lesson in sequential relationship aiming for students to discover themselves, enable participating teachers to retain the knowledge that they have learned so that they can link knowledge to learning. This corresponds to Vygotsky's Constructivism Theory (Nicholl, 1998; cited in Vygotsky) stating that the developer must value the importance of interaction as a tool for mental development by emphasizing the development of potential ability beyond now. These procedures can improve participating teachers to develop their teaching skills efficiently. (Kittichai Suthasinobon, 2010).

3. The study on students' satisfaction toward the development of teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model was conducted through a questionnaire. Students were asked to give their opinions on three items. Item 1 was about the appropriateness of teaching activities. Findings showed that students rated this item at high level in four aspects: ordering activities, setting activities from easy level to difficult level, limiting the amount of in-class activities, setting good length of time for activities. Item 2 was about appropriateness of teaching process. The results revealed that the students rated 5 aspects at high level as follows: a preview of a lesson, order of teaching process in good match with content and time, use of varied teaching aids and learning resources, different ways of evaluation using observation, questioning, testing, project evaluation

and marking homework. Besides, some useful recommendations were given to develop students' projects. It was found that students rated the teaching very high in two aspects: teachers' explanations and examples enabled the students to understand the lessons very well, and students were given opportunities to participate in doing activities. Item 3 was about the benefits that students obtained from Buddhist Instruction Model. Students expressed their opinions and rated these four aspects at high level: students are enhanced to work and get along well with other people, students could explain their own learning process, students got experience from hand-on training and practice, students had good physical, emotional, social and wisdom development while learning. The reason students felt good in learning was that teachers acted as their role model. Teachers' good conduct was better than words of teaching, so good rapport between teachers and students was important for learning. Studying with teachers who have good conduct, knowledge, and stable mind, students could absorb mercy, kindness and good will from teachers and they could further extend kindness and good will to others. This belief agreed with Phra Promkunaporn (P.A. Payutto, 2004) who stated that teachers who knew the principles and strategy of good teaching would teach students to be a perfect man. This belief corresponded with Phra Buddhataaspikku (1992) who believed that if teachers did their teaching based on Buddhist ways comprising three parts: teaching so that students can understand, doing to convince students to have confidence and giving examples of happiness as witness. This will motivate students to learn and lead them to success. Thus, teachers can act as a role model by acting or doing as example, living to give evidence, leading lives with good morals, all of which are factors to enhance students to see the worthiness of living in good morals. Therefore, students will have faith and confidence in teachers. This will enable students to be obedient and non-aggressive. Good teachers encourage students to learn. When they give clear explanation, arrange different learning activities, students will learn quickly and happily. Consequently, teachers are very important in the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model.

4. Regarding other issues, Buddhist Instruction Model was designed by analyzing the link between integrated teaching based on Buddhism and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy by the researcher. Findings revealed that the teaching process included a combination of concepts, frameworks especially the system to develop students to become a perfect man in Buddhism which is called Trisikkha, and the way of leading life following the principle of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy granted by His Majesty the King for Thai people. All concepts are well combined in unity. For example, the concept of morality is correspondent to three linking circles: sufficiency, logic, and self-immunization or self-independence of sufficiency economy philosophy. In regard with concentration, it is well-correspondent to conditions of knowledge. For example, when Sufficiency Economy Philosophy granted by His Majesty the King is applied in teaching, there will be a perfect integration resulting in efficient teaching required of all citizens to be ready for changes in the new society. Students are well-prepared and get ready to lead their lives happily in the present context of Thai society and they can sustain Thai identity in the future as well.

Suggestions

1. Suggestions for Applications

1.1 This research study can be used as guidelines to develop learning activities. It might be set as a policy applying innovation in teaching morality to students and young learners through the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model. Some proper adjustment can be made to disseminate and promote d education of our nation to a proactive and progressive position.

1.2 The limitation of the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model depends on the faith that learners have toward the virtues of religion applied to teaching. A manual with examples of good teaching plans should be provided for those interested in using the model so that they can understand the teaching process clearly and can do the teaching efficiently.

1.3 More teachers should be trained to develop their teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model. Teachers should be aware of the importance of education which apply principles of religion to teaching and learning. They should also take part in managing and developing education correctly and thoroughly as well as making use of innovation to develop teaching to suit the culture of the nation for future teachers of our country.

1.4 To build up confidence for teachers in developing their teaching skills, we or those who are responsible should train teachers in a friendly and sincere manner and in a friendly atmosphere so that they can participate in managing teaching based on Buddhist Instruction Model effectively.

2. Suggestions for Further Studies

2.1 There should be a study conducted to integrate the teaching skills based on Buddhist Instruction Model and the teaching skills based on Sufficiently Economy Philosophy. The integrated teaching skills of these two frameworks should be administered to regular schools in Thailand, countries in ASEAN community and global population for sustainability.

2.2 There should be a study to investigate the opinions and needs of teachers, administrators, parents and students in developing teaching skills under the Royal Project.

2.3 Research should be conducted on developing and participating process in teaching under the Royal Project in the dimension of education of the twenty-first century working together with external offices of government and private sectors.

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