

DEVELOPMENT OF A KNOWLEDGE TRANSMISSION PROCESS MODEL FOR ENHANCING SUFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE SELF-RELIANCE FOR THAI WISDOM TEACHERS

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Abstract: This research was aimed at analyzing the process in transmitting the knowledge of Thai wisdom teachers and developing a model of the knowledge transmission for them, which leads to sufficient and sustainable self-reliance, including the making of recommendations on policy to enhance the knowledge transmission process for the Thai wisdom teachers and their related network by adapting the qualitative research method in obtaining the data. The research methodology comprises three stages 1) documentary study; 2) field research; and 3) development of a model for the transmission of knowledge.

Keywords: Knowledge Transmission Process Model, Sufficient and Sustainable Self-reliance, Thai Wisdom Teachers

Introduction

The development of human resources and the society in the past led to the extreme of a capitalist society or consumerism, which was induced by the 8th and The 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan. These plans focused on production to respond to consumption; emphasized the economic growth rate, yet lack concrete policy in creating a balanced society and environment. The quality of life of the majority of the Thai people has not yet attained a satisfactory level. Many people still lack access to a good quality of life, not having sufficient and sustainable self-reliance due to the influence of consumerism, which emphasizes a leapfrog growth, but ignore the traditional culture and wisdom, leading to continual problems. While the society advances, facilitated by information technology, there is a surge in problems: political, social, and economical problems, poverty, physical and mental illness, drug addictions; degradation of moral and increase in crime (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, B.E. 2550).

The policy to promote knowledge management for Thai wisdom, which was approved by the Cabinet on November 16, B.E. 2542, stipulated

that past development of the country was not as consistent as the Thai cultural lifestyles as it should, resulting in prevalent problems and crises. The overall development of human resources and education primarily followed the Western concept. Hence, moving forward, human resource development will be adapted to be congruent with the Thai cultural lifestyles. Applying the wisdom, which has been accumulated in our country, will form an integral foundation for the development of people and educational reform. It is imperative to incorporate the cultural dimension in the development (Office of the Education Council, B. E. 2549). The “wisdom holders” are the significant cogs in integrating the cultural dimension to the said development, as they will play an important part in the community development process.

As for the wisdom holders, some of them have been recognized as “Thai wisdom teachers” with the responsibility to transmit the Thai local wisdom in 9 areas: agriculture; industry and handicraft; Thai traditional health care; management of the natural resources and the environment; community funds and business; arts; language and literature; philosophy, religion and tradition; and nutrition (Office of the Education Council, B.E. 2549). The “Thai wisdom teachers”, who have been recognized by the Office of the Education Council, are those whose basic attributes include having a distinct knowledge and skills to the extent of being an expert and/or having the expertise to use one’s knowledge to spread or disseminate the information in the form of educational management in any one form or integrate them into several forms. There are 3 forms of educational management: formal education, informal education and self-learning, including Thai wisdom teachers who are able to apply their knowledge and to solve the problems or enhance the quality of life for themselves, their family, and locality until they meet with success to become a role model or prototype, which are, more importantly, accepted by the public (Office of the Education Council, B.E. 2551).

Nevertheless, it was found that the process of the knowledge transmission of the wisdom holders is plagued with obstacles due to various factors. The research by the Office of the Education Council B.E. 2541 stated that the obstacles of knowledge succession of these wisdom holders include the lack of records, because they are not accustomed to recording; lack the communication skills and unable to pass on the knowledge, nor using an easily understood language; or in recording details to be passed on or disseminated. In some cases, they

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withhold the knowledge zealously based on belief or being forbidden to share the knowledge, which has been passed from generation to generation. Moreover, there is the issue of benefits, by plagiarizing the knowledge to derive benefits from it.

Although agencies from all the societal sectors were enthusiastic in finding a solution as well as seeking measures to create a balance to a society plagued with problems, through the high priority assigned to development plans, the situation still persists and seems to aggravate yearly. At the same time Khru Prayong Ronarong of the Mairieng community in Nakornsrihammaraj, a “Thai wisdom teacher” in community funds and business has achievements, which has been widely recognized and he also received the Magsaysay Award in B. E. 2547. The principle of teacher Prayong Ronarong is to establish the “Yommana Networks”, which are the networks of para rubber, fruits and farming. Organizations in the network of these three occupations have expanded throughout Nakkornsrihammaraj and nearby provinces. They are united to build strength in social, economic, and political issues. Additionally the set up the “Education Center and the Development of the Mairieng Community”, a learning center, drew the interest of many people. Agencies both domestically and internationally came to visit to learn their practice continuously. Similarly, Khru Monrat Saraparb, the third generation of the Thai wisdom teacher in nutrition of the Khunmon Plantation in Karchanaburi province, is the pioneer to creatively upgrade the local products to international level such as the producing of corn milk, which had been the first Thai firm to be certified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The processing of agricultural products such as baked vacuum-packed bananas, herbal soap, adapted the loincloth to be used for other purposes such as tissue box cover, curtain, kitbags, garments for dogs, etc. by applying group management.

Meanwhile Khru Kwandin Singkam is the third generation of Thai wisdom teacher in environmental natural resources management at the Sisa-asoke Community, Sisaket province. Widespread activities have been organized to transfer the knowledge in pesticide-free agriculture, organic fertilizer, maintaining the soil, water and environment conservation, as well as taking an integrated health care through the Health Rehabilitation Project free of charge since B.E. 2551. Moreover, the community is open to both the public and private sectors to learn and serves as a learning center open to the nearby community. Similarly, Khru Insorn Suriyong of the Natural Agricultural Center Mae-on in Chiang Mai province, the sixth generation of Thai wisdom teacher in agriculture, has spread the knowledge of organic

agriculture and other knowledge. Emphasis is made on the use of organism that are efficient in planting including the adaptation to use in the household such as soap, shampoo, livestock, growing rice in limited space focusing to create self-reliance both in the economy and health following the sufficiency economy. These 4 Thai wisdom teachers are considered to have attained success in self-reliance in a sufficient and sustainable manner. They play a role in helping society both nationally and internationally on a wide scale.

The study on the knowledge transmission process of these 4 Thai wisdom teachers will be used as a “prototype” to be implemented with Thai wisdom teachers and related networks. It will act as a catalyst and create a trend for a balanced society, which is currently confused, and to be in line with The 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E. 2550-2554), which vision is to emphasize development toward a ‘Green and Happiness Society’. From the preceding principle and rationale, the researchers are interested in developing a knowledge transmission process model for enhancing sufficient and sustainable self-reliance for Thai wisdom teachers. The qualitative research method is used in order to have in-depth information and details, which can be used to explain the phenomena including the alternatives, leading to an “Ideal Knowledge Transmission Model”. It can be used as a role model in the development of individual and the society to be sustainable.

Objectives

1. To analyze the process in the knowledge transmission of the Thai wisdom teachers to have sufficient and sustainable self-reliance.
2. To present the knowledge transmission process model for enhancing sufficient and sustainable self-reliance for Thai wisdom teachers.
3. To present recommendations on policy to support the knowledge transmission of Thai wisdom teachers.

Literature Review

The researcher studied the relevant concepts, theories including various researches and used them to analyze and synthesize into the knowledge transmission process Thai wisdom teachers, using the 5 relevant concepts, namely Transformation Learning Theory, Experiential Learning Theory, Innovation, Sufficiency Economy and Self-Reliance, including the review of related literature both in Thai and from foreign countries. The details and important issues are used as a framework in analyzing and synthesizing the model for the knowledge transmission process of Thai wisdom teachers as follows:

Transformation Learning Theory

The essence of the Transformation Learning Theory stated that matured people have the potential and freedom in thinking. A person with any experience will see and interpret the arousal or the phenomenon according to their experience within the Frames of Reference in defining and understanding that phenomenon. Therefore, whatever the frame of reference, they will react accordingly.

The conditions which will help in learning from the perspective transformation consist of 1) negative feeling or dissatisfaction of the current situation; 2) analyzing the context and related experiences and 3) giving importance to past critics with reason and judgment.

The Transformation Learning Theory can be used as a tool in explaining and understanding as well as using it as a concept in analyzing the knowledge transmission process of Thai wisdom teachers. Most Thai wisdom teachers and those who come to learn have received negative impact from leading their lives in the modern societal trend. Hence, they turn back to select and improve on the traditional way of living which has been inherited. In other words, due to the dissatisfaction or faced with problem these people sought a more appropriate way of leading their lives, which are harmonious to the Transformation Learning Theory. The poverty and hardship dilemma experienced, induced them to learn and have a change in perspective and way of thinking. With a changed belief and frame of thought, the person will have an integrated behavior in leading their daily life, thus resulting in a sustainable change, which will not take them back to the vicious cycle.

Experiential Learning Theory

The Experiential Learning Theory is a holistic and integrated learning concept. It provides the opportunity for the learners to create one's own knowledge, capability, attitude, and values. Learners ask questions and find the solution themselves through various methods, including engaging in learning activities, getting practical experiences from a real or simulated situation, criticizing, discussing, deliberating, reviewing and reflecting on one's own thought. This could take place in a classroom set up, outside the classroom or at the work place. Experiential learning is thus a link between theory and practice leading to changes in a person.

Kolb's Learning Style (Kolb (1984) explains that the learning cycle from experience stated that learning can start from any point of the cycle, but it must complete the learning cycle starting from 1) Learning Experience, which has an influence on the learner enabling the learner to manage the various situation according to the learner's experiences, and

will lead the learner to either accept or deny; 2) Observe and Reflect, which the learner will reflect on their thought through observing and deliberating on the experience, enabling them to distinguish whether they are beneficial or not; 3) Generalize and Conceptualize, which is the knowledge combination to create a framework for the related concepts from past experience and then to create one's own concept and 4) Experiment and Integrate, which is the review of learning experience through practical experience, experiment and understand the truth in various situation, which will lead to the changes in the way of thinking and the behavior of the learners.

Experiential learning thus is harmonious with managing the knowledge transmission process for Thai wisdom teachers, which transmit the knowledge from the way of life and can be applied to the real daily life. The value of learning from experience is the learning process, which motivates individuals to achieve life-long learning, induces people to seek for knowledge and experiences from various learning sources, from nature without any limit to the method, place, time and occasion. Individuals are able to have flexible learning thus providing opportunity for people to learn from their experience, interest and voluntarily.

Innovation

Innovation is referred to as thoughts, new ways of doing things including both concrete and abstract elements, which bring about changes to the society. Although the element has been effectively applied to another society, if it is being used to applied to another society resulting in changes, it is an innovation. "Accepting innovation" according to Everett M. Rogers (1983) stated that accepting innovation can be divided into 5 phases namely 1) Awareness, which is the phase that the receiver is aware of the existence of that innovation; 2) Interest, which is the phase that the receiver is interested whether the innovation can help solve existing problem, thus starting to find more information; 3) Evaluation when the receiver will evaluate the information as to whether it can be used to solve his problem or not; 4) Trial when after deliberation, it is possible to help in solving his own problem. The receiver will try out the innovation and 5) Adoption, when after the trial the innovation is effective, thus the learner will accept and adopt it permanently or until it becomes ineffective. If it is ineffective, such innovation will not be accepted by that person anymore.

Adopting innovation is thus an important process that one has to give priority and interest to understand nature and the phases in the acceptance of the concepts, innovative ways of doing things, which

differ from routine or traditional way, which results in the smooth and effective transmission of the knowledge of Thai wisdom teachers. It will also lead to the changes in the way of thinking and leading one's life to sufficient and sustainable self-reliance, and not faced with the same old problems.

Sufficiency Economy

Sufficiency Economy is a concept and philosophy that His Majesty the King initiated for his Thai subjects to lead their way of life. He emphasized the concept to solve the problems so the Thai society would be able to get out of the economic and social crises. The Sufficiency Economy comprises 3 important characteristics viz. sufficiency, rationale and self-immunity. The first 2 conditions are that of the knowledge and morality, which will lead to a balanced and sustainable development and able to accept changes in all aspects such as economic, social, environment, knowledge and technology.

From the aforementioned, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy is thus appropriate to use as the guideline and way of thinking in developing the sufficient and sustainable self-reliance for Thai wisdom teachers, which will help Thai people and society to survive in a stable and sustainable manner amidst globalization and global changing trend.

Self-Reliance

Self-Reliance refers to the ability to sustain one-self independently and abundantly both on an individual level and in the community. Self-Reliance must change with the times to be appropriate and balanced. Individuals, community and society, which are self-reliance must possess the 5 self-reliant components viz. 1) technological self-reliant; 2) economical self-reliant; 3) natural resource self-reliant; 4) spiritually self-reliant and socially self-reliant.

The Self-Reliance concept is thus a concept which can explain the results of the knowledge transmission of Thai wisdom teachers because the main principles in transmission of knowledge which has been passed on, value-added until it can be applied to real life, which demonstrates self-reliance which is sufficient and sustainable, both being self-reliant in technology, economy, natural resources, spiritually and in the society.

From the synthesis of the knowledge transmission process, the following 7 steps were derived: 1) verification of the experience/critical situation which leads to the need for receiving the knowledge transmission; 2) the evaluation, review and consideration of past problems; 3) designing the plan to organize activities in the knowledge transmission process; 4) the knowledge transfer methodology; 5) continuous practice; 6) evaluation of the knowledge

transmission; and 7) integrate the new knowledge into the lifestyle from a new perspective.

The 2 components which are the supporting mechanism for effective knowledge transmission are 1) the fundamental concept of Thai wisdom teacher and 2) the cultural context of each locality.

This process of knowledge transmission, which is synthesized from studying the concepts, theories and various researches, was used as guidelines in gathering the data, in addition to using questionnaires and field observation through case studies.

Research Scopes

The scope of this research to study the knowledge transmission of 4 cases and the relevant context of 1) Khru Prayong Ronarong in Nakkornsrithammaraj province; 2) Khru Monrat Saraparb, Kachanaburi province; 3) Khru Kwandin Singkam Sisaket province; and 4) Khru Insorn Suriyong, Chiang Mai province. The analysis and synthesis of the process of knowledge transmission of these 4 cases were made by considering the various components of the knowledge transmission process, comprising the philosophy of Thai wisdom teachers, transmission procedures, evaluation and the comments of stakeholders including the relevant context, which leads to the development of sufficient and sustainable self-reliance.

Research Methodology

This research on the development model of the knowledge transmission process of Thai wisdom teachers in the context and conditions applied by using case studies to collect the preliminary data to develop the knowledge transmission process model for enhancing sufficient and sustainable self-reliance for other Thai wisdom teachers including other networks, which are ready and want to implement such transmission process in their own context and conditions. In addition to the emphasis on the information of the process, the procedure in the knowledge transmission, it also emphasizes the cognitive, interpretation on the occurrences from the attitude, perspective, values, beliefs and principles of Thai wisdom teachers, related parties and the community under this research. Hence, the qualitative research method was used in collecting the data under the following 3 stages.

Stage 1 Documentary Study is the study on the analysis of information relating to the concept, philosophy in life, knowledge, transmission process of knowledge of the Thai wisdom teachers, in the context of both the individual and society. A study was also conducted on the relevant concept, which pertains to the learning process, transmission of

knowledge process of Thai wisdom teachers to be the preliminary data for the data collection plan. The information was analyzed and synthesized having obtained from various media, documents, researches and other extant literature, and retrieved from all electronic sources. The information obtained has been synthesized into the “knowledge transmission process” to develop an instrument, which serves as a guideline in subsequently doing the field research.

Stage 2 Field Research consisted 1) preparation for the field research, which includes the selection of cases for the study, conduct a pilot study to gather information about the geography and building rapport with the target cases 2) doing the field research by collecting data from the 4 Thai wisdom teachers, using the synthesized instrument relating to the knowledge transmission process as the framework in collecting the data. This comprised both participatory and non-participatory observation and conducting in-depth interviews with the case studies and relevant informants. The information was analyzed and the results tested with the each case, group and organizations that receive the knowledge transmission and the related network through group interviews.

Stage 3 Development of the model comprising the synthesizing of the model of the 3 Asoke cases. After finalizing the model, the results were tested with the relevant parties who are the cases under study, representative of Thai wisdom teachers and the network, which will make use of the knowledge transmission process through focus group discussion. The tested model was then given to experts for their consideration, through the presentation to each individual to obtain the expert judgment.

The Conceptual Framework

(See figure 1 in last page)

Expected Benefits

1. The derived model can be adapted to the knowledge transmission process of other Thai wisdom teachers and the relevant networks, according to the society, culture and other conditions stipulated.
2. Contribute to academic literature for setting strategies and policy to enhance the Thai wisdom in educational management, and to support the knowledge transmission process for Thai wisdom teachers and relevant network leading to a sufficient and sustainable self-reliance at the community, society and national levels.

Findings

In conducting the qualitative research method the researcher had analyzed, synthesized and conclude the

data in accordance with the model of knowledge transmission process for enhancing sufficient and sustainable self-reliance for Thai wisdom teacher, which comprise 8 steps:

(See figure 2 in last page)

- Step 1 Evaluate and discuss the problem or need of the receiver
- Step 2 Adjust the conceptual framework
- Step 3 Plan the transmission of knowledge
- Step 4 Transmit knowledge and experiences
- Step 5 Create a participative atmosphere
- Step 6 Imbue public consciousness
- Step 7 Create the knowledge exchange network
- Step 8 Evaluate the knowledge transmission

The details are as follows:

Step 1 Evaluate and discuss the problem or need of the receiver

In evaluating and discussing the problems and needs of the receiver of the transmission knowledge in the preliminary self-evaluation. It enables both the Thai wisdom teacher and the receiver to be aware of the problem, having a clearer picture and the level of the learning need of the receiver.

Step 2 Adjust the conceptual framework

The adjusting of the conceptual framework is a very important step because a sufficient and sustainable adjustment to the self-reliant behavior requires a conceptual framework first. After changing the conceptual framework, the behavior will change into the new perspective that will not revert to encounter the same old crisis and problem.

Step 3 Plan the transmission of knowledge

In planning the transmission of knowledge information obtained from Steps 1 and 2 were used. When evaluating and discussing the problem about needs and adjust the conceptual framework of the receiver, the Thai wisdom teachers will plan the appropriate transmission and congruent with the problem and needs of the receiver by not being attached to any one transmission plan. It will however be an adjustment, which is appropriate with the condition and context all the time by focusing on the utmost benefit that the receiver will get.

Step 4 Transmit knowledge and experiences

The Thai wisdom teachers used lectures by giving knowledge from theories and real-life experiences, update social information, demonstration, hands-on experience and real practical experiences. The documentary as well as electronic media was used to

assist such as VDOs, films, transparency slides and power point, pamphlets, posters and actual materials, which are relevant to the knowledge to be transmitted.

Step 5 Create a participative atmosphere

In creating a participative atmosphere, the Thai wisdom teachers adapted the concept of the sense of ownership in the things they do and also the business concept- the more you do the more you get in the proportion that was contributed. The receiver, which are villagers get together to create various products and are in the status of being joint owners, rather than being only an employee in the manufacturing process. This made the receiver have self-esteem, work happily and spread the happiness to the people around them.

Step 6 Imbue public consciousness

In imbuing public consciousness to help and share with other people, the focus is on sacrificing without being worried that other people will know more or will use the transmitted knowledge for personal benefit. It is an important tool for the knowledge transmission of Thai wisdom teacher, which helps to continue spreading the knowledge so that they are not lost over time.

Step 7 Create the knowledge exchange network

Thai wisdom teachers will advise and distribute documents consisting the names and addresses of the network, which are doing similar work to those who come to receive the knowledge transmission, so they will be able to learn and build additional network. This will have good results in terms of expanding the concepts and the way of work to be more widespread. The Thai wisdom teachers who are already burdened with their work will not have to take on additional workload, because they have network in many areas.

Step 8 Evaluate the knowledge transmission

The evaluating of the transmission process of the Thai wisdom teachers can be divided into 2 stages: evaluating during the transmission process and post transmission evaluation. For the evaluation during the transmission process observation about the level of interest, asking and responding to questions and hands-on experiences when engaged in the various activities of the receiver were the methods used. As for the post transmission evaluation, a visit to the site where the receiver of the knowledge transmitted, providing knowledge and giving additional recommendations on a periodical basis were used. The receiver then can ask for more information from the Thai wisdom teachers all the time.

From these 8 steps of knowledge transmission process, the receiver of the knowledge

from the Thai wisdom teachers, who were the case studies, mostly will integrate the knowledge received with their life from a new perspective and conceptual framework. From this model if the receiver encounter any crisis and wanted to change themselves they are able to start from Step 1 that of Evaluate and discuss the problem or need of the receiver and continue with the other steps of this model.

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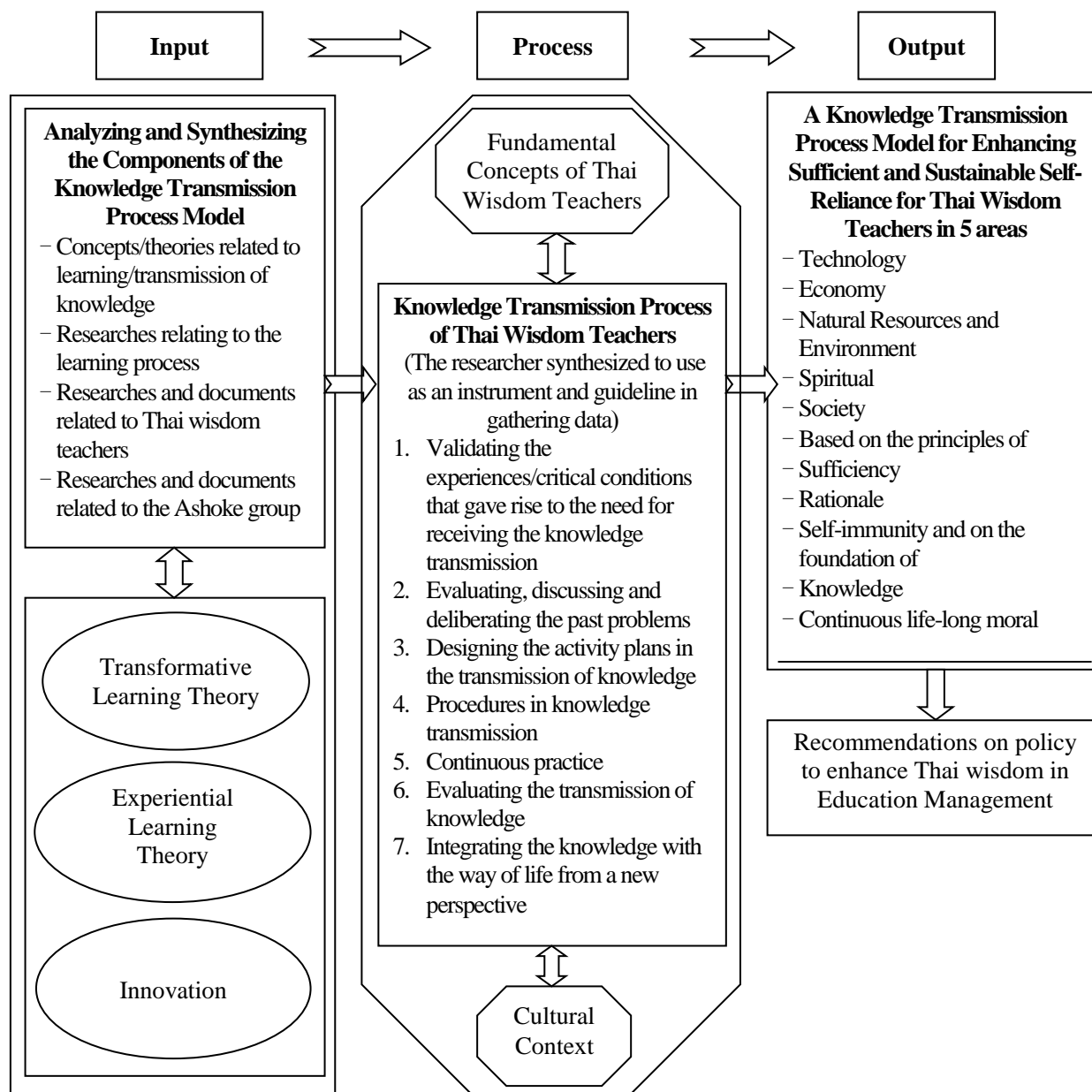


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

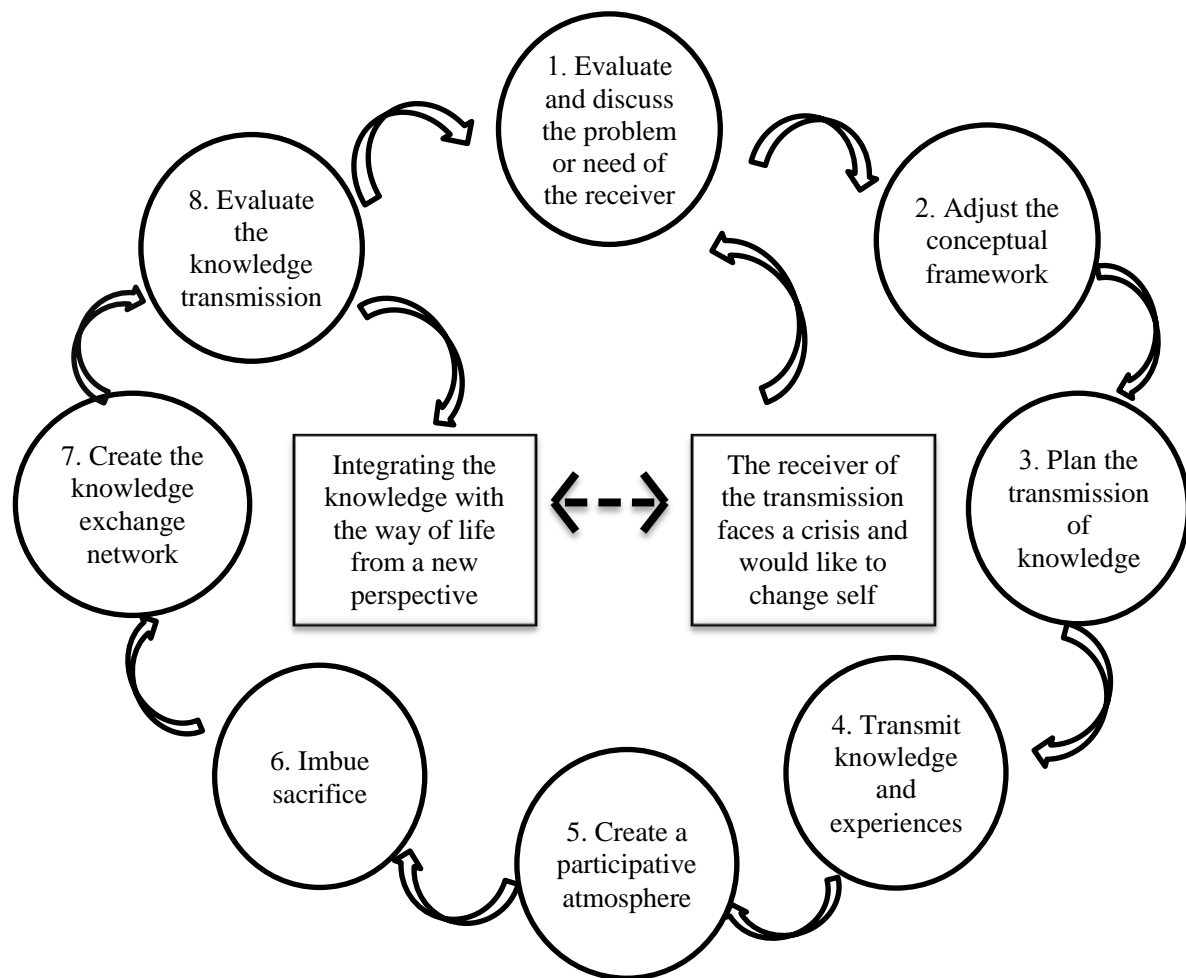


Figure 2: Eight Steps