

A MODEL OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN HISTORY INSTRUCTION

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Abstract: Education has played an important role in creating development for the country and enhancing new knowledge and perspectives for people by studying the core details of each course. Education is also counted as a key aspect in creating the quality of a being human. This means that education reveals the characteristics and performance of humans at their best.

According to Thai history teaching today, opening up the texts and elaborating details in classrooms is widely performed as if it is a teaching conduct for many instructors. Thus, the contemporary Thai education should emphasize Thai historical study in order to build patriotism, nationalism, and moral standards for the students. However, in current curriculum, Thai history study takes part as one of the components in Social studies—which is one or not more than two chapters for each level of students—and it will be omitted if the instructors are unable to teach all the chapters in time. On 12th August 2008, Her Majesty the Queen succinctly noted in her speech on her 76th Birthday that the current educational system does not support needed understanding of the origins of Thai people: This is because Thai students today have limited historical knowledge, since it has been removed from the school curriculum.

As for the significance of teacher leadership in the field of history, it helps to prepare students for “responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in the modern economy” (U.S. Department of Education, 1990). In history, interpretation of evidence is made in accordance with the degree of its importance and accuracy. This is done by applying logic and “best guesses” to knowledge about people and their times. Consequently, the ability to place times and events in chronological order is important in establishing cause-effect relationships. Historians not only examine the motives and actions of people, but also often apply principles from science and scientific discoveries to help them interpret the evidence (Sunal & Haas, 2008). Consequently, history study is mandatory in school and deserves its rightful place in the Thai basic education curriculum. Best practices are a model for the revival of history in Thai schools. Given this, leadership models of teachers in history instruction are the core objective of this study.

The results of documentary research on this topic reveal four dimensions necessary in building a model of teacher leadership in history instruction: leadership actions, coaching, leadership mentoring, and teacher leadership self-assessment. Findings are discussed within

the theoretical framework of teacher leadership capacity (Lambert, 2003). Actions include three forms: one-on-one, inquiring, collaborating and sustaining. Coaching contains adult development, dialog, collaboration, and organizational change. Findings from the best practices of teachers in history study can be grouped into five strategies. These are: create, shift, surface, continually indicate, modeling behaviors, and become more skillful. Finally, ‘diffusion of innovations’ theory is used as the core theory in the model building.

Everett M. Rogers’ diffusion of innovations theory (2003) is applied as the main theoretical framework. The theory described innovation diffusion as “a general process, not bound by the type of innovation studied, by who the adopters (are), or by place or culture” (Rogers, 2004, p.16), such that the process through which an innovation becomes diffused has universal applications to all fields that develop innovations.

In addition, diffusion of innovations theory has its own four key elements as (1) Innovation, (2) Communication channels, (3) Time, and (4) Social system. These four key issues are used to evaluate both best practices in social studies in the whole country (20 best practices) who is awarded by Office of National Education Commission (ONEC) as a leader in teaching, then constructing a draft model of teacher leadership in history instruction. After that, a draft model is necessary to validate terms of implementation and utilization. Finally, the process goes on to access the feasibility of a model with a comparison between primary and secondary teachers in BMA schools.

Introduction

History study is the key issue to prepare the ethics and moral standards of citizenship -in light of using the case of history, which is the part of being Thai people- to emerge opportunity for creating reconciliation in Thai society. The study of Thai history benefits Thai students in creating their patriotism and nationalism, which are the essence of building the strength of Thai society: This leads to national development. Besides studying the origin of Thai culture, the significance of Thai history study manifests in the virtue appearing in its factual knowledge. Thus, to teach this course effectively, instructors must approach effective communication, first, in order to pass on the factual knowledge to their students, second. The research attempts to reveal the effectiveness of teacher leadership in Thai history study- or known as best practices, then construct a model of teacher leadership in history instruction, which is useful for teaching history. The process uses Rogers’ diffusion of innovations theory as key to the research.

According to communications with students, teaching methods are ways of presenting factual knowledge or core content in a given field of study to students focusing on the ability to understand and apply skills of students

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according to the area of study. The difference in teaching methods is dependent on teachers' performance; with their perspectives of using innovations plus selecting the communication channels to raise the perception of students. Numerous strategies designed to promote prospective teachers' technology use in authentic contexts are documented, including requiring technology integration in student teaching experiences (Dexter & Riedel, 2003; Strudler & Grove, 2002). The relationship between prospective and practicing teachers is based on the notion of collaboration rather than on an expert/novice relationship. The team pools its experience and knowledge to develop activities, projects, and strategies that support student learning and improve both partners' ability to integrate technology into the curriculum (Dawson, 2006). Hence, the actual teachers' performance affects directly the student ability to understand. Then, the creativity utilizing innovations (instructional techniques) constitutes the accessibility and understanding ability towards a specific course.

Theoretical Framework

The study uses the Rogers' theory of "diffusion of innovations" (2003) as a key issue to interpret all elements that happened in the research and integrate the concept of theory with an educational purpose of improvement in Thai history study for BMA schools. Moreover, Rogers' theory can be the frame to measure the findings in this study because of its relevance and manner of concept presentation.

In addition, diffusion of innovation theory has its own four key elements:

a.) Innovation

An innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by individual or other unit of adoption. Knowing of a technological innovation creates uncertainty about its consequences in the mind of potential adopters (Rogers, 2003).

b.) Communication Channels

A communication channel is the means by which messages get from one individual to another. The nature of the information exchange relationship between a pair of individuals determines the conditions under which a source will or will not transmit the innovation to the receiver and the effect of such a transfer (Rogers, 2003).

c.) Time

The time dimension is involved in diffusion in: (1) The innovation-decision process by which an individual passes from first knowledge of an innovation through its adoption or rejection. (2) The innovativeness of an individual or other unit of adoption compared with other members in social system. (3) An innovation's rate of adoption in a system, usually measured as the number of members of the system who adopt the innovation in a given time period (Rogers, 2003).

An individual seeks information at various stages in the innovation-decision process in order to decrease uncertainty about an innovation's expected consequences. The decision stages leads (1) to *adoption*, a decision to

make full use of an innovation as the best course of action available, or (2) to *rejection*, a decision not to adopt an innovation (Rogers, 2003).

Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than other members of a social system. We specified five *adopter categories*, classifications of the members of the social system based on their innovativeness: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority, (4) late majority, and (5) laggards. The *rate of adoption* is the relative speed with which an innovation is adopted by members of a social system (Rogers, 2003).

d.) Social System

A social system is defined as a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal. The members or units of a social system may be individuals, informal groups, organizations, and/or subsystems (Rogers, 2003).

The social and communications structure of a system facilitates or impedes the diffusion of innovations in the system. One aspect of social structure is *norms*, the established behavior patterns for the members of a social system (Rogers, 2003).

Opinion leadership is the degree to which an individual is able to influence informally other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior in a desired way with relative frequency. A *change agent* is an individual who attempts to influence clients' innovation-decisions in a direction that is deemed desirable by a change agency (Rogers, 2003).

Conceptual Framework

The research emphasizes constructing a model of teacher leadership in history instruction through analyzing the data from best practices and the key ideas from diffusion of innovations theory. As such, there are two main components in the conceptual framework: History of instructional design and best practices. To organize the idea of constructing a draft model, diffusion of innovations theory will be used to help in building the research instrument. According to diffusion of innovations, four keys elements reflect the effectiveness of innovations and strategy: innovations, communication channels, time, and social system.

History -instructional design

Teaching is a process of continuous decision making that involves planning, implementation, and evaluation. If teachers base on their decisions on an understanding of how students learn Social Studies effectively, they can increase their ability to develop Social Studies lessons that work (Sunal and Haas, 2009). This section has three key elements. They are (1) Exploratory Introduction, (2) Lesson Development, and (3) Expansion.

Best practices

The strategies in Best Practices fall into five educational arenas: (1) Integrate curricula, (2) Thoughtful instruction, (3) Active learning, (4) Reflective transfer, and (5) Authentic assessment.

Section 1 presents a panoramic view of natural, holistic instruction. Section 2 focuses on the concept of

thoughtful instruction. The third section corrals the ideas, or best practices that drive *active learning*. Section 4 focuses on the ultimate goal of schooling—*reflective transfer* for lifelong use. This section profiles meta-cognitive approaches to learning, where the target is learning for a lifetime, not for a test. The final section on *authentic assessment* discusses learning logs and portfolios, as well as ways to use Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences as expensive tools for assessing (Fogarty, 1995).

Diffusion of innovations

Rogers (2003) describes the diffusion of innovations as the process by which (1) an *innovation* (2) is *communicated* through certain *channels* (3) *over time* (4) among the members of a *social system*.

The research uses diffusion of innovations theory as a frame of reference in constructing the instrument of the research. Then, it would bring about the result of best practices' performance in terms of innovation, communication channel, time, and social system to construct a model of teachers for history instruction's leadership in instruction.

A model of teacher leadership in history instruction

This section uses the key idea from Lambert's teacher leadership, which is categorized into four elements as leadership actions, coaching, leadership mentoring, and teacher leadership self-assessment. Each element describes how to enhance the leadership's performance for teachers.

The research aims at using the outline of Lambert's theory to conduct a model of teacher leadership in history instruction along with the dimensions of diffusion of innovations.

The Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study are: (1) To study best practices in social studies instruction in primary and secondary schools. (2) To develop an instructional model inculcating diffusion of innovations theory to reinstate History into BMA schools' curriculum. (3) To validate the proposed model. (4) To assess feasibility of the model with a comparison between primary teachers and secondary teachers in BMA schools.

The Expected Outcomes

1. The result of the study proposes a model of teacher leadership in history instruction for teaching Thai history that uplifts the standard of teaching methods, helps to reform the curriculum structure of Thai history study so as to be one of academic progression in contemporary education for all levels of students.

2. The research expected that a draft model of teacher leadership in history instruction would be validated by concerned people and would be implemented

in BMA schools, creating awareness of studying Thai history as a national benefit.

3. The study is expected to provide the authorities and those concerned with a model of teacher leadership in history instruction; to explore the differences in teachers' performance comparing primary and secondary schools through a using t-test process; to utilize descriptive statistics in order to make changes and reform the educational master plan in the future.

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