

Empowering Communities in Educational Management: Participatory Action Research

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Abstract

The participatory learning and action: PLA was the process used for empowering in this program. This process has four steps: 1) create awareness, 2) specify problems or needs, 3) act and 4) present and reflect or monitor. The purposes of this study were: 1) to investigate the conditions of communities in terms of context and problems or needs in educational management in their secondary schools 2) to develop community empowerment program and 3) to examine the results of each program in 4 empowerment levels: individual level, team level, organization level and community level. The research was carried out with two teams: a 19-member Ban-chiang community team; 19 subjects and a 17-member Thung-fon community team. These 36 participants were chosen using a purposive sampling technique that led to outcomes of 4 empowerment levels in every indicator. This program, therefore, should be supported and promoted in order to empower them and create sustainability.

Keywords: empowering community, educational management, participatory action research (PAR), participatory learning and action (PLA), community empowerment program

1. Introduction

In the past, education in Thailand before formal schooling began was promoted and learned by family and community. Parents, religion, leaders community organizations transferred their culture, ways of living, knowledge or professions to their children for generations. Traditionally, home, temple and school have been closely related to each other throughout nowadays (Wasee cited in Keawdaeng, 2003). Communities are groups of people that may or may not be spatially connected but they have common interests, concerns or identities. These communities could be local, national or world wild. In other words, communities have participated action with shared purposes, have exchanged ideas with each other, have co-operately learned from each other (Wasee, 1998; Urban Environment and Area Planning Division, 2004; WHO, 2010). Community is a social organization and is not an individual. It is far more than a mere collection of individuals. It is an entity, sometimes described as “*super organic*,” that transcends the individuals that compose it at any one time (Bartle, 2010). Community empowerment helps build both persons and organizations so that they recognize their knowledge and resource mobilization skills, their own decision making abilities, their accessible community resources and problem solving skills (Isarel cited in Chujit, 2007). Community empowerment, therefore, is more than the involvement, participation or engagement of communities. And community empowerment is a process of re-negotiating power in order to be empowered, then others will be sharing their existing power and giving some of it up (Baum, 2008).

Empowerment has become one of the most salient concepts in modern management theory and practice (Geroy, Wright, & Anderson, 1998). Empowerment is a construct that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviors to social policy and social change (Rappaport, 1981, 1984). Empowerment is not only a process, however, it can also be thought of as the life and outlook-changing outcome of such a process for individuals, organizations, and whole community (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).

A school is an organization in the community. Both school and community are inseparable. In other words, they depend on each other. The empowered school administrators usually focus on stake holders such as school

boards and community organization representatives who take a part in educational management of school. The school has provided opportunities for them to share, change and express their feelings, ideas and experiences with school personnel (Pongsrirat, 2000; Samsawang, 2006).

2. Statement of Problems

According to the national education act (1999), community organizations should be involved in helping to solve the schools' problems. However, research findings of the research revealed that educational management of school system has many community empowerment problems. Firstly, educational management of Thailand's schools remains a monopoly of each school system. Meanwhile, the community has still not really been involved in school management. Administrators and teachers have continued to deal with problems of education and maintain the control over resources. It seems that educational management system is top-down (Office of the Educational Reform, 2002; Uthakamonon & Chokworawattanakorn, 2002; Chujit, 2007; Office of the Educational Council, 2009). Secondly, most of activities of parents, school boards and community in school were not focused on improving the quality of student learning. They were supplementary activities of educations e.g. fund raising, rooms building, and providing facilities and so on. The school boards, community organizations and parents did not clearly understand their roles. Some of them might be interested in education development, but they were not provided a chance to share and exchange ideas, so no longer participated in school activities. Despite some changes in school board rules, the relationships between the school and community were not better. In addition, the burdens of some parents meant that they could not share in school management (Hawanon, 2000; Keawdaeng, 2003). Lastly, all educational quality levels are not still met now. Even though, educational organizations have continuously focused on educational development, but the educational management issue is also complicated. So, all educational organizations and all stake holders have to seriously cooperate to improve and develop strategies together. For a national agenda focuses on education's contribution to quality society (Office of the Educational Council, 2009).

3. Literature

Zimmerman (2000) and Zimmerman and Perkins (1995) said that Empowerment theory, research, and intervention link individual well-being with the larger social and political environment. They explained that there are three empowerment levels: individual, organization and community. Theories of empowerment include both processes and outcomes, suggesting that actions, activities, or structure may be empowering, and that the outcome of such process result in a level of being empowered (Swift & Levin, 1987; Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment is more than the traditional psychological constructs with which it is sometimes compared or confused e.g. self-esteem, self-efficacy, competency, locus control. Empowerment has been defined as an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking on equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources; or a process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community, and a critical understanding of their environment (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989; Rappaport, 1987). A distinction between empowering process and outcomes is critical in order to clearly define empowerment theory. Empowering process for individuals might include participation in community organizations. At the organization level, empowering processes might include collective decision making and shared leadership. Empowering processes at the community level might include collective action to access government and other community resources e.g. media. Empowered outcomes refer to operationalizations of empowerment that allow us to study the consequences of empowering processes. Empowered outcomes for individual might include situation-specific perceived control and resource mobilization skills. The outcomes of organization might include development of organizational networks, organizational growth, and policy leverage. Community level empowerment outcomes might include evidence of pluralism, and existence of organizational coalitions, and accessible community resources (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman & Perkins, 1995) This research has 14 the empowerment indicators that have been applied from the theory of Zimmerman (2000) and Zimmerman and Perkins (1995) as shown in Figure 1.

Team is a group that has participated working with shared or exchanged ideas with each other for participated goal. Member in group has a role, devotes himself, respects member's ideas and depends on each other on working. Each has to work corporately on his own burden in order to work in high quality (Francis & Young, 1979; Woodcock & Francis, 1981; Nolan, 1987; Parker, 1990; D. Johnson & F. Johnson, 1991). Team building is a process to develop group working to get through the goal efficiency. Team building enhances cooperative working, problem solving corporately, mutual trust, mutual respect, responsibility and democratic participation, etc. in group working (Parker, 1990; D. Johnson & F. Johnson, 1991; Jamjumras, 2007). This study has been applied team or team building to be an empowerment level as shown in Figure 1.

Many research findings on community problems revealed that community involvement could be achieved through various techniques or strategies of empowerment including participation, collaborative working, partnership, participatory learning and action which problem solving to the community (Lewis et al., 1998; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; WHO, 2010). Participatory approaches are recommended throughout the empowerment process. Participation contributes to strength in community (Bartle, 2010). In this study, therefore, the researcher intends to empower communities in educational management by using participatory actions research in all stages of study. And the empowering process was conducted by using participatory learning and action (PLA) to develop the community empowerment program. PLA steps have been applied from the theory of Lewis et al. (1998) and Erawan (2005), have 4 learning steps: 1) awareness, 2) specify needs and problems, 3) act and 4) present and reflect as shown in Figure 1.

4. Research Questions

- What is the current need and problem of communities in educational management towards secondary school?
- What should the community empowerment program in educational management of secondary school be?
- What will the community empowerment program affect to individual, team, organization and community levels?

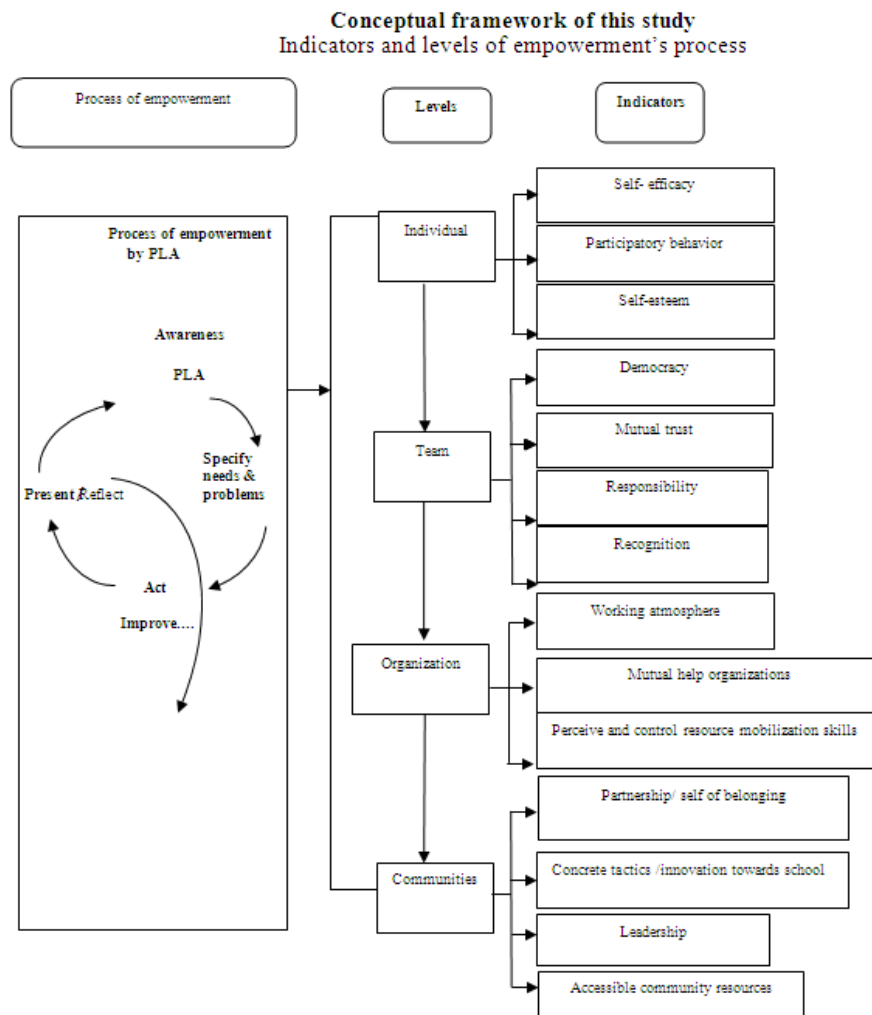


Figure 1. Conceptual framework: empowering communities in educational management: participatory action research

Note. PLA: Participatory Learning and Action.

5. Method

The subjects consisted of two community teams from two school districts two districts of Udonthani province, northeast Thailand: Ban Chiang team from the Nong-han district and Thung-fon team from the Thung-fon district. The team consisted of school representatives, parent representatives. The researcher selected these two communities since both of them consisted of strong points. In addition, both communities included the similar geometrical, social, cultural and educational contexts. So, they could be developed as good example for the other communities. The instruments used for data collection in this study were questionnaires, an observation form and a note taking form. This research study contains both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The statistic used for quantitative data were mean, percentage, standard deviation and mean comparison by Wilcox on Signed Ranks Test.

The research was comprised of three stages:

The Figure 2 is shown the stages of this study and the Table 1 is given summarization from the Figure 2.

Stages of the study: Empowering Communities in Educational Management: PAR

The research was comprised of three stages that were described more details as follows.

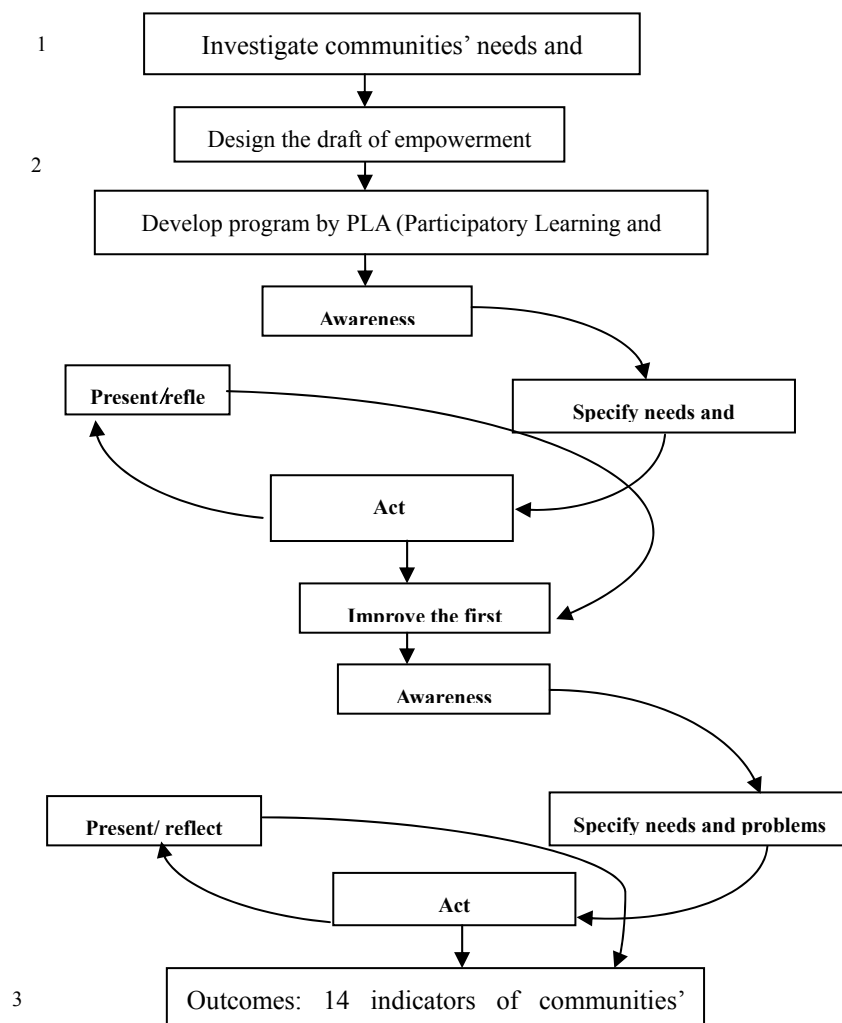


Figure 2. Stages of the study

According to Figure 2, the table below is shown the summarization of the study's stages.

Table 1. Research Procedures

Stages/Process	Activities done	Person involved	Procedures/ Collecting data	Results/outcomes
1. To Investigate communities' needs & problems	1) study documents theory involved in research/PAR research	-researcher	-note taking/ check reflect / collect data	-conceptual framework
	1) study documents/research involved	-researcher	-informal talk/non	-2 communities selected & 2 research field schools
	2) plan to collect data/coordinate communities and organizations involved	-researcher/co-researchers/schools school board/	-formal interview/ note /checklist	-meet current needs and problems of communities
	3) study necessary information of communities	- local knowledge persons/parents/ school's key man -researcher	- Informal talk/non-informal interview/observe/ note/checklist	-local knowledge (provide the content in program)

2 To develop the community empowerment program	1) design and draft the 4 sets of action meeting: objectives, techniques, content, activities, evaluation, media, instruments used, etc.	Researcher & co-researchers	-workshop/study 4 sets of action	-4 techniques of 4 sets of action meeting in empowerment programs :
1) Draft & design program, then present it to 5 specialists in order to improve and give comments, improved it again	2)then, present it to 5 specialists to correct/improve/comment /improved it again.			1) training workshop
2) develop program	3) provide the action plan : date/time/activities/responsible persons, etc.			2) consulting
-provide the action plan				3) team-building meeting
-Act or implement to the action plan in round1	4) Implement by PLA in round 1 with 2 techniques : training workshop and consulting	specialist/researcher /co-researchers/head s of academic affairs/school administrators	-workshop -note/informal talk/non-informal interview, questionnaires ,observation checklist	4) confrontation meeting
				-action plan
				-to understand local knowledge curriculum management
				-3 indicators in individual and team levels
round 2	5) Implement by PLA in round 2 with 2 techniques : team-building meeting and confrontation meeting	researcher/co-researchers/heads of academic affairs/school administrators/teachers	-workshop -note/informal talk/non-informal interview , questionnaires	-to conclude the lesson of local knowledge curriculum management
				-indicators in team, organization and community levels
3 To examine corporately the results of program in 4 empowerment levels	1) specify indicators in every levels /how to evaluate and provide action plan	Researcher and co-researchers	-meeting after implement round 1 and 2 / consulting/note taking and observation	- 14 indicators in 4 levels : individual, team, organization ,community (75 sub-indicators)
1) specify indicators expected and how to evaluate	2) follow the action plan			- community empowerment program accomplished
2) Evaluating	3) reflect the evaluation and summarize the results of each level			
3) Reflecting the evaluation				

Stage 1: To investigate the conditions of communities in terms of context and problems or needs in educational management in their secondary schools, there were 3 sub-stages; 1) the researcher studied the theory, research and document involved in empowerment and participatory action research, then collected and reflected on data in order to prepare research framework which consisted of 14 indicators in 4 levels: individual, team, organization and community; 2) the researcher determined how to collect data and coordinate communities and organization involved in this study. The researcher coordinated the research field schools and then, selected the communities to be the subjects in this study. The subjects chosen were Ban Chiang community including Ban-Chiang Wittaya secondary school and Thung-fon community including Thung-fon wittayakarn secondary school; and 3) the researcher investigated the conditions of communities in context and problems or needs in

educational management in their secondary schools. The researcher participated in communities for 2 months, and made friend with the villagers until being familiar with the students' parents, housewife group, school boards, Local Administrative Organization, and Local Scholars in order to ask for current situation, problem, and need of community on Educational Management in their own localities. Then, the researcher discussed with the teachers, students, and school boards in Secondary School in order to ask the current situation, problem, and need of school as well as to find the issue and need for shared development. Later on, the researcher and co-researchers collaborated in analyzing both of problem, and need as follows: 1) the data collection, 2) the analysis of problem and need, 3) the determination of problem and need, and 4) the determination of implementation for solving the problem and need by using the Participatory Action Research Process. The researcher as well as co-researchers collaborated in analyzing, critiquing, and providing reasons by allowing the co-researchers express their opinion openly through Open dialogue. The co-researchers listened as well as took note in their discovery as well as other notices regarding to research, the findings by collecting the problems and needs of communities as well as schools in order to organizing into group, for example, the students' problem in their risky behavior such as dropping out, adultery, game addiction, narcotic drug addiction. In addition, the needs of community was to conserve their local knowledge like farming, weaving, pot molding and color painting, language wisdom, and wickerwork etc. Then, the issues were discussed with Secondary School by every division as the co-researchers, teachers, and administrators to critique as well as express their opinion and reason again. The problems were collaboratively determined by ranking the priority of significance from high to low. The consensus was searched which issue needed to be developed first. The results revealed that under the current conditions. Local customs and traditions were a part of the learning content in program of empowering community. The instruments used in this stage were an interview, a checklist and a note taking. These instruments were administered to school boards, administrators, teachers' parents and local knowledge person. This information was gathered over a three-month period.

Stage 2: Developing the community empowerment program would take almost 5 months. The workshop was held in the secondary school meeting room. There were 2 sub-stages. 2.1) The researcher and co-researchers drafted and designed the program in terms of 4 sets of action meeting : training workshop, consulting, team-building meeting and collaboration meeting; which consisted of objectives, activities, steps of learning , content, evaluation, medias, times. The processes of developing the community empowerment program were two cycles or rounds. The first one was the training workshop and consulting; and the second one was the team-building meeting and collaboration meeting. 2.2) The researcher and co-researchers had been proceeding on the plan provided. The action plan consisted of empowerment techniques, duration of action, activity of action and responsible person. The co-researchers had been trained with two sets of action meeting in each round. The roles of researcher were an observer, a facilitator or a moderator who closely monitored the activities provided. The instruments used in this stage were questionnaires, interview, observation form and note taking form. The first and the second rounds were performed by participatory learning and action (PLA) which has four steps: 1) create awareness, 2) specify problems or needs, 3) act and 4) present and reflect or monitor the works.

In the first round, there were two sets of action meeting: training workshop and consulting. *The first* set of action meeting started with training workshop. The researcher invited a specialist who is the president of the school board of best practice school in Ayudthaya province. She built up the co-researchers awareness by exchanging and sharing her experience about the best practice in the roles of school boards, parents and community in educational management, as well as participatory roles of community in the school's learning and teaching. Then, co-researchers worked in groups to share and exchange ideas among themselves to identify their problems and/or needs. Next, they identified various kinds of local knowledge to provide school curriculum. Lastly, they presented and reflected on their activities to the meeting. After that, they scheduled their filed work for 1 or 2 months. *The second* set of action meeting involved consulting. Researcher and co-researchers negotiated and presented their findings on what local knowledge should be included in school curriculum to an administrator or a head of school academic affairs so that they meet their demands. And the roles of school were to promote and support local knowledge to be achievement on the project. The results of individual and team indicators were collected in this stage.

The second round included two training courses: team-building meeting and collaboration meeting. The third set of action meeting focused on team-building meeting.

Co-researchers performed the course activities by PLA. Co-researchers were heightened their awareness by watching VCD of a team working with a school board and parents' meeting (sources: Teacher TV Channel, 2013). Then, they discussed it among themselves. Next, they also reflected and negotiated about their work completed one or two months ago. After that, they worked in group to share exchange and express ideas, about

local knowledge curriculum. Then, they set the goal, mission and outcomes indicating success of the local knowledge curriculum. Next, they collected and analyzed the information, then prepared results to present to the groups. Lastly, they presented their works to the meeting. And all participants helped reflect on or monitor their works cooperatively. The fourth set of action meeting was collaboration meeting. It aimed to help school and community meet their needs and problems of providing curriculum which was an important issue to develop both school and community cooperatively. Co-researchers presented their works to the administrator, the head of school academic affair and the home science teachers. After that, all participants actively proposed the possible guidelines, sources of learning, budgets, process to practice, following up and evaluation in order to manage local knowledge curriculum in school successfully. The results of team, organization and community indicators were collected in this stage.

Stage 3: To examine the results of program in 4 empowerment levels: individual, team, organization and community. There were 3 sub-stages in this stage. 1) Researcher and co-researchers brainstormed to establish expected indicators and methods of evaluation, and then, had the meeting to prepare the evaluation plan. 2) Researcher and co-researchers evaluated and improved indicators on the plan provided. And 3) Researcher and co-researchers reflected on the results of evaluation in 4 empowerment levels. Finally, this community empowerment program became a complete program. The results of this evaluation are presented in the next section.

6. Results

The results of this study answered the following research questions.

1) The results of the investigation of context, needs or problems of both Ban-chiang community and Thung-fon community in educational management in their secondary schools were divided into two main sections:

The first one was conditions of context of Ban-chiang community and Thung-fon community which could be concluded as follows:

- The findings examined revealed that conditions of context of both communities had the same contexts in local background and environment conditions. They were situated in a municipality and had the same secondary school level in middle size and level of students in secondary and high school (M.1-M.6).
- Most of the populations are Buddhists. They have usually followed to Esan culture and traditions in twelve months as we call “Heat-sip-sorng-klong-sip-see”
- Main Occupation of their populations are farmers.
- The leading industries of both communities were local knowledge and agricultures.

However, there were quite different in each community context. For example, the leading industries of Ban-chiang is tourism. It is a world heritage site, tracing its local history back 5000 years. The museum and shops focus on ancient written design of pots or jars, Thai-puan threading, handicrafts, rice farming. The main industries in Thung-fon farming and local crafts related to daily life e.g. animal farm, rice farm, mee-kid threading or cotton threading, sa-ra-pun-ya (a local team singing),herbs and treatments.

- Language of both Communities is Esan but each has a different tone. Ban-chiang people call that “Thai-puan language”.
- Both of communities emphasized the importance of education in their secondary schools. The school boards of both communities were regularly invited to participate in school activities e.g. meeting yearly for reporting the progress of the school, parents meeting. Besides, they often support the secondary school willingly in terms of budgets, educational funds, sport accessories, etc.

The second one was needs or problems of Ban-chiang community and Thung-fon community. According to consensus of researcher, co-researchers and involved persons, the needs or problems were screened with four steps: collecting problems or needs, criticizing them, defining the needs or problems and defining the solutions by doing a workshop plan. The result of a discussion was that local knowledge was an essential issue to develop in a school local curriculum. It implied that both communities had many of the same aspects of community in environmental context, populations’ occupation, religion, language, and awareness of secondary school’s education, especially the highlight custom and culture were various kinds of local knowledge in each community. And, the communities need to preserve their local custom and traditions in order to assure the continuation of their lifestyles. It, furthermore, is relevant to secondary school’s policy and the national education act (1999, edited 2002), Section 27; the second paragraph: In accord with the objectives in the first paragraph, basic education institutions shall be responsible for prescribing curricular substance relating to needs of the

community and the society, local knowledge and attributes of desirable members of the family, community, society and nation. According to the reasons above, thus, both communities made decisions to choose this issue to incorporate into the curriculum of their secondary schools. This issue provided learning content in developing the community empowerment program by participatory learning and action (PLA). Lastly, a researcher and co-researchers defined 14 indicators (75 sub-indicators) in 4 empowerment levels: individual, team, organization and community.

2) The result of developing the community empowerment program by PLA process, the program provided by the researcher and co-researchers consisted of sections of the program, empowerment process and strategies of empowerment more details:

- Sections of program consisted of concepts, objectives, content, activities, process and steps of practicing, media, evaluation and activity times.
- Empowerment process was PLA which has 4 steps: a) awareness, b) specify problems or needs, c) act and d) present and reflect or monitor.
- Strategies of empowerment had 4 sets of action meeting: training workshop, consulting, team-building meeting and collaboration meeting. The 4 sets of action meeting were performed by PLA and they were divided into two rounds: the first round and the second round as the following results.

The results of the first round were collected from each training course.

- The results of workshop training showed that both communities had determined local knowledge in terms of local knowledge's titles, learning sources, roles of community to curriculum management, content area, evaluation, community's gold and expectations.
- Consulting involved cooperative working between school and community. Researcher and co-researchers invited a head of school academic affairs and an assistant-school director to consult and brainstorm ideas to get the road map of curriculum. The results of consulting found that there were subject credit, techniques or strategy of learning and teaching, learning activities, evaluation techniques, evaluation durations, evaluation context, and evaluators: student, teacher, local knowledge person or parents other suggestions.

The results of the second round were derived from each sets of action meeting.

1) The results of the team-building meeting revealed that both communities had the following outcomes: (a) the team met their mission by assuming responsibility for assisting with school curriculum, promoting the incorporation of local knowledge into the curriculum, and by monitoring and evaluating the curriculum in cooperatively with school personnel. (b) missions of team; co-meeting, take responsibility, promote it to community public, monitor and evaluate it co operatively. (c) evidence of team success: included local knowledge curriculum developed and implemented on time, as well as community and parents' roles of implementing the curriculum. In addition, students could investigate the local customs, build skills in local crafts and develop a positive attitude towards their local culture.

2) The collaboration meeting between schools and communities revealed that, (a) subjects content including with teachers as a local knowledge (b) content research techniques: internet, documents involved, interview local knowledge, etc (c) transferring local knowledge with knowledge management (d) preparing scheduled time of curriculum in the second semester in 2013 (e) providing lists of local knowledge in the communities or providing a local knowledge museum for communities (f) promoting a local knowledge curriculum to communities (g) providing a curriculum project in annual plan.

3) The results of examine the outcomes of 14 indicators in 4 empowerment levels: individual, team, organization and community. After doing workshop of 4 set of action meeting, the results were demonstrated into two rounds as in the table below.

The instruments used for data collection in the first round were questionnaires, an observation form, a note taking form and an interview. Then, the researcher and the co-researchers reflected on the results from collected data, and had a consensus for each community. There were outcomes of 7 indicators of individual and team levels of the first round in both communities as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. The outcomes of the first round of Ban-chiang and Thung-fon communities

Indicators	Ban-chiang community		Thung-fon community	
	Satisfied Level	comments/suggestions	Satisfied Level	comments/suggestions
individual level		Members were satisfied towards the outcomes. However, they would self-assessment after the first round workshop once.		Members were satisfied towards the outcomes. However, they would self-assessment after the first round workshop once.
1) self-efficacy	very		very	
2) participated behavior	very		very	
3) self-esteem	very		very	
team level		Members suggested that they would increase more all indicators of team levels.		It was an important point to improve urgently because it was the weak point of team working. (The agreement of data was from questionnaire, note taking form, observation form and interview).
1) democracy	very		neutral	
2) trust	very		neutral	
3) responsibility	very		a little	
4) recognition	very		a little	

According to the Table 2, Ban-chiang community was very satisfied with all indicators of individual and team levels. However, members felt they would improve all of them in the next round.

Thung-fon community was very satisfied on all indicators on the individual level. On the other hand, indicators on team level were “neutral” and “a little”. Members realized that of them in the next round.

The results of the second round: the instruments used for data collection of this round were questionnaires and interview. Then, the researcher and the co-researchers reflected on the results from the collected data, and had a consensus for each community. Totals of all indicators in both communities are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The outcomes of the second round of Ban-chiang and Thung-fon communities

Indicators	Ban-chiang community		Thung-fon community	
	Satisfied Level	Proceeding	Satisfied Level	Proceeding
individual level				
1) self-efficacy	very	Schools and members will go on this workshop continually after research finished	very	Members will propose the study best practice project of local curriculum to school.
2) participated behavior	very		very	
3) self-esteem	very		very	Then, they will go on workshop corporately.
team level				
1) democracy	highly	Schools and members will provide schedule time to perform and evaluate the curriculum	very	Members focused on more team working and to seek for devoted person to work in team.
2) trust	highly		neutral	
3) responsibility	highly		neutral	
4) recognition	highly		neutral	

organization level				
1) atmosphere	highly	Schools and members will	very	School will plan and act curriculum
2) corporation between school and community	highly	plan and provide schedule time to continue curriculum by PLA process.	very	project completely in 2013 academic year
3) resource mobilization skills	very		very	
community level				
1) depending on between school and community	highly	Members will organize and clarify community for local curriculum. And they will	highly	School and community will prepare a local museum in school and provide medias and list local wisdoms in district corporately.
2) creating innovation	highly	also provide list of local	very	
3) leaderships	highly	wisdoms. School will do	neutral	
4) accessing resources	highly	website for them.	highly	

The table above shows that the members of the Ban-chiang community took action on all levels. They were 'highly' satisfied in 10 indicators and 'very' satisfied in 4 indicators. Besides, the co-researchers suggested activities for each level. As a result, the local curriculum will continue.

The outcomes of Thung-fon community revealed that they were highly satisfied in 2 indicators, very satisfied in 8 indicators and neutral in 4 indicators. However, the co-researchers proposed that they needed to study the best practice of local knowledge of customs and traditions and to cooperate with the school to complete the local curriculum. In addition, the team members also needed to improve their teamwork.

7. Discussion

According to this study, the conclusions of research findings found that the current situation, problem, and need of community in providing the empowerment for community in educational management in Secondary School, both communities as Banchiang, and Thung-fon in Udontani Province consisted of strong point as well as unique truly including Local Wisdom as the way of life for local people for a long period of time, for instance, cloth weaving, wickerwork, farming, singing Sora-panya/Paya (especially in Ban-chiang Community being well known as Ban-chiang World Heritage) local knowledge for inheriting the Art as well as Culture from their ancestors in painting the design in the jar etc. According to these things, the communities were proud of the usefulness in learning program management in Secondary School which would be useful for their own offspring in communities as well as locality. These youths would inherit their ancestors' traditional knowledge to be existed in communities throughout the time. Besides, this work would be a good cooperater between school and community since the community, parents, school boards could participate in educational management by establishing the local program through real practice with school. They thought that they were important to collaborate in school development for their locality to be progress. It would be useful for their offspring in locality. Furthermore, the school could develop the local program by community participation truly.

Furthermore, the important process that helped community empowerment to succeed was PAR and PLA. PAR was a process to empower communities in educational management used in all stages of the research. The research technique allowed the communities to take part in all stages of the research, starting with the community needs assessment, then developing programs and instruments, taking part in workshops, and evaluating results as Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) reported that the principle and basic characteristics of process of participatory action research are implementation. That means all members have participated in all stages of the research: defining problems or needs, collecting data, checking data, making plans and concluding and evaluating. Thus, the participation of community members contributed to the success of this research. And PLA, the process of empowerment used in the program has four steps: 1) create awareness 2) specify problems or needs 3) act and 4) present and reflect or monitor the work. It was found that the learning process helps the participants to use their abilities to solve problems on their own. In addition, these activities helped them understand problems and present their ideas coherently and confidently. Besides, PLA could also increase participation in 4 empowerment levels of both communities: individual, team, organization and community. So, PLA could increase participants 'strength and sustainability. As Lewis et al (1998) explains "PLA is a process enabling community members to meet their needs and resources and PLA allows communities to discover their

own wealth of knowledge and capacity for problem identification and problem solving. And the results can be both spectacular and sustainable”.

Besides, the researcher found that Participatory Action Research: PAR was the research for developing and solving the social as well as community problem being interested widely in the present. The research study was started from community by encouraging the villagers or community representatives to construct new body of knowledge for them and community. The outside researchers were responsible in being the facilitators for research process to be accomplished congruently with its goal. (Tadsiwach, 2010) However, the Participatory Action Research provided major factors in various issues for sustainable development including: the community participation in research process which the researcher had to construct precise knowledge and comprehension in which phase for participation in process, for instance, the phase in determination of problem, the phase in planning the action, the phase in monitoring, the phase in conclusions of research findings etc. Furthermore, the community had to be developed its awareness of significance in building one's conscious and desire to participate in. Since they would see the importance of this study for themselves as well as community truly. Then, the researcher had to inform the duration of research study, and set the agreement in duration or session for research implementation clearly, because the community would understand and make plan whether they could dedicate their time. In addition, they had to know how to participate in, and in what extent of participation. Finally, the researcher should be aware of context relating to community people, and the organization to be developed such as Culture, Value, Social Background Characteristic, and Strength or Strong Point of Community. These things would help the researcher in making decision for the issues to be developed, understanding the participatory role, and approaching the community very well. Therefore, the approach of empowerment for community development through PAR, according to the above reasons, it could be stated as the guideline for participation including: Why do you participate? Who would participate in? What issue to be participated in? How would be participated in? And in what extent?

Lastly, there were still other issues of factor of success in this research. First, the administrator in charge of empowerment in both schools focused on community participation in educational development. Secondly, the Ban-Chiang community was strengthened in terms of leadership knowledge, family relations, and individual self-esteem. These characteristics encouraged members of community to be confident, express ideas, and have a community spirit that increased their determination to improve school and community relations. Thirdly, because the heads of school academic affairs know their communities well, they were a good choice to help organize the research and develop cooperation between the researcher and communality. Lastly, the researcher believes that this research will be successful according to the three factors listed. The researcher applied strategies in terms of leadership, flexible time or place for subjects' interviews, and use of an informal style that helped to develop good relationship and helped PAR be completely. However, the researcher also encountered some obstacles in the research process.

8. Limited of the Study

This research used a PAR method which involved members of the community which led to some difficulties. Firstly, personnel management was difficulty in this community research because each member had many roles or jobs in the community so finding a suitable meeting time was a problem. Since, the researcher as outsider, she tried to contact a school administrator or a head of school academic affairs for help. They could suitably organize or manage the time and persons for meeting. Besides, the other personnel problem found that most of co-researchers were members of municipality council or sub-district council. They had to spend 1-2 months campaigning for re-election. These campaigns coincided with one or two months of vital stage of project. However, researcher followed up with them by interviewing some co-researchers in individual or small groups in the available time. If the research was taken so long, it would not be evaluated its advance. Secondly, for the issue of problem and obstacle should be discussed was the team working in the topic of value in some Thai People who do not prefer to work in team. Another part of research team work do not have responsibility in their duty as well as dedicate their time to attend the meeting. They had knowledge in team working. But, they didn't have intensive understanding in team work process. They lacked of precise cooperation and communication. They didn't have leadership since they didn't have self-confidence whether they could help the other persons. In addition, they didn't have self-awareness as a part of team working which they often be depended on the others. Moreover, they didn't evaluate their work regularly. As a result, their empowerment in team work level wasn't obvious. As Songsri (2013) concluded that the value of learning how to work in team, was the obstacle for Thai People throughout the time. Since they didn't prefer to work or study in team. Although they worked in team, the team would always search for those who would be more intelligent, elder, superior knowledge. The person was respected rather than principle. Furthermore, another value of Thai people was individualized by considering the

convenience as well as comfort as criterion. It was supported by Kedsakorn's (2003) opinion that the obstacles of team working were: 1) the speech and agreement were not precise from the beginning to the end, the team's role, and individual's role, 2) the relationship between super-ordinate, and sub-ordinate wasn't in supportive way, each one had problem in one's work. So, their problem solving techniques would be in opposite way, and 3) there was no evaluation of team working which should be performed periodically and regularly. Consequently, there was a lack of communication between school and community, initiation of innovation for school, leadership, and the access in community resources. Lastly, the budget problem, the researcher who would conduct the PAR research, should find the research grant since the Participatory Action Research was time consuming for obtaining the precise findings. As a result, the other kinds of expenditure were needed, for example, the high cost of Action Training including the food, the document, the co-researchers' transportation fares. In this study, I as a researcher spent my personal budget without financial support from the other work units

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