

School-Based Training (SBT) for In-service Teacher Development : A Strategy for the Success of Learning Reform in Thailand *

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I. Background

Thailand promulgated the National Education Act as her first comprehensive education law in 1999. The main objective of this Act is to improve the quality of Thai learners. Chapter 7 of the National Education Act 1999 requires the teaching profession to be developed on a continuous basis while Chapter 4, which is the salient feature of the Education Reform, emphasizes the shifts in pedagogical practices away from the teacher-centered toward the learner-centered pedagogies. (ONEC 1999).

As all parts of the country believe that ***learning reform is at the heart of education reform as well as teachers play a significant role to develop the quality of learners***. It is therefore essential for development of individual teachers to be able to reform the learning process in accordance with the requirements of the knowledge-based society in order to improve the quality of learners or students to their full potential.

In the past, the training programmes for developing in-service teachers in Thailand have been mainly organized by the central agencies, such as the supervisory units of the Ministry of Education. The training often takes place in a central hall or a hotel in the city, which involved high expenditure for teachers to be absent from schools, at the same time they must leave the students of their class. Most of the training uses lecture more than practice and lasts only 2-3 days, without monitoring or evaluating the training programme. (Surasak Labmala,2002). This type of training is a one-shot affair which has no continuity. Therefore, educational institutions are obliged to try to find a new method of in-service teacher training which is effective and sustainable and which should take place at school.(Rung Kaewdang,2002)

The Office of the Education Council or OEC (the new name of Office of the National Education Commission following the law related to reorganization of the Ministry of Education in 2003)which is a government agency responsible for educational policy and planning, has launched 4 pilot projects on teacher development since 1998 to study an effective training for development of in-service teachers. The results of study reveal that School-Based Training (SBT) is a new paradigm to develop the teachers and the teaching profession as well as

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* At its meeting on March 4, 2004, the Fourth Scrutinizing Committee of the Council of Ministers gave its approved to the Strategic Plan for Reform of Teachers and Educational Personnel 2004-2013. The Plan recommends various strategies including that for development of teachers' capacity, which could be enhanced through School-Based Training - SBT. (The Office of the Secretariat of the Prime Minister,2004)

contribute to the success of the learning reform in Thailand. This finding support a recommendation of Dr.Hitendra Pilley(2002)on teacher development for quality learning in his report to ONEC and ADB. He sees that the priority for teacher development should be school-based in-service training (Fry,2002:28).

II. Study and results

The 4 pilot projects of the Office of the Education Council are as follows :

1. Master Teacher Project is aimed at selecting outstanding teachers who are able to use the student-centered approach for the learning process of their students. Those selected are recognized as the Master Teachers. They received a subsidy of Bt 25,000 per person to create 10-teacher networks during 4 months to adopt the student-centered approach. This project had proceeded during the year 1998-2001. At present, there are 586 Master Teachers who have trained about 8,848 teacher networks. (Khruu Ton Baeb Bii 2544,2001)

2. National Teacher Project is aimed at selecting outstanding teachers Who are able to conduct research and development on Learning Reform. Those selected are recognized as the National Teachers. They received a subsidy of Bt 220,000 per person/per year to conduct a research and development as well as train a network of about 50 fellow teachers during his/her research for 3 years. This project has proceeded during the year 1998-2001. At present, there are 26 National Teachers who have trained 1,500 teacher networks to adopt the student-centered approach. (Khruu Haeng Chaat,2001)

The results of these 2 projects have shown that the training by Learning Reform Change-Agents such as Master Teachers or National Teachers can help other teachers in school and those nearby to change their behavior of traditional teaching into Student-Centered Approach. They trained their teacher networks at school by the so-called "Kalyanamitta Model". It focuses on training at school and meeting the needs of teachers. This method is similar to the concept of School-Based In-service Training of many countries such as the European countries, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.(Office of the Education Council,2004) Consequently, the OEC proceeded to launch other SBT pilot projects in 3 and 4 below.

3. Project on Research and Development on Models of School- Based Training. (ONEC,2002). This project had proceeded during the year 2002-2003. The objective is to develop models of SBT as well as to make teachers appreciated and be able to adopt the student-centered approach for their teaching and learning process. The OEC has selected 10 teaching profession societies/associations and has provided them with financial support to conduct the R&D on SBT model during the second semester of academic year 2002. The synthesis of the 10 SBT models reveals that they all have produced effective and satisfactory results. Trainers are able to help trainees change their beliefs about their practices. Trainees were enthusiastic for self-development and work as a group to solve students'problems. The participatory process happened in school shows a new innovation of teacher development. The students have learned happily and enjoyed themselves so much doing many activities to seek and gain

knowledge by themselves. Moreover, SBT model needs only small amount of money to use for necessary expenses. It is recommended to implemented another pilot project with larger sample sizes in different parts of the country to confirm the results of this study.(Pruet Siribanpitak & Aurapan Pornsima, 2003)

4. Project to Support School-Based Training : Policy and Strategic Plan for In-service Teacher Development for the Promotion of Learning Reform. (ONEC,2003). This is a continuation of project No 3. It has proceeded during the year 2003-2004. The objective is to select 274 change-agent teachers to be provided with a subsidy of BT 25,000 per person to train their fellow teachers. Each change-agent is required to train about 10 fellow teachers of the same school or the schools nearby during the second semester of academic year 2003. This project is still on-going. However, results have been obtained from the monitoring through site-visits, confirmed the results of project No 3. Moreover, it also found the essential factors which can make the SBT programme successful, for example the principal should recognize, support and facilitate all the training programme, the teacher trainers themselves should be accepted and regarded as leader of learning reform by their teacher networks. (Pruet Siribanpitak, Snong Lohitwisas, Suwimon Wongwanich & Aurapan Pornsima, 2004).

III. The principles of School-Based Training

Following the study of 4 pilot projects, the OEC has prepared the guideline for School-Based Training for In-service Teacher Development for basic education in Thailand. The guideline are based on following principles: (Pruet Siribanpitak & Aurapan Pornsima,2003)

1. The training is in fact a development process based on the real situations and actual needs of both the schools and the trainees, with the ultimate aims of enhancing the trainees' capacities in organizing the learning process and the students' capacities.
2. The Training takes place at school (School-Based) or sometimes in the community (Community-Based) with the school being responsible for the training project.
3. The trainees' capacities are enhanced by the teachers or groups of teachers, who are learning reform leaders. These resource persons are familiar with the learning reform requirements stipulated in Chapter 4 of the 1999 National Education Act. They have expertise and experience in SBT teacher development. The essential requisites are faith and genuine recognition on the part of the trainees.
4. The Training is on a voluntary basis.
5. Both trainers and trainees join efforts in conceptualization, planning and carrying out line training.
6. The Training involves actual practice, availing of different teaching

and learning methodology, training materials, media and activities, which will be applied to real classroom situation.

7. The training is repeated on a continuous basis and avails of a variety of methods, involving regular group meetings and individual consultations with the view to collectively finding solutions to problems and enhancing the students' learning.

8. For the training, the PDCA process is availed of i.e. Planning, Doing, Checking and Action. PDCA is in fact an on-going process, benefiting from the evaluation outcomes which are used for improvement in the planning.

9. The training is in fact a "Kalyanamitta Model" which involves supervision, monitoring and evaluation. A variety of evaluation methods are availed of and are applied before, during and after the training. The evaluation is based on both the training outcomes as well as achievements of the trainees' students.

10. The training is part of the trainees' regular functioning with the ultimate aims of raising the quality and standard of the teaching profession as well as the students' capacities.

IV. Key Factors of School-Based Training

An effective School-Based Training required 10 key factors as follows :

1. Principals/ school administrators provide the necessary support and encouragement as well as facilitate the training to achieve the desired goals. They see to it that the teacher development plan forms part of the annual school work plan. They also assist in obtaining additional resources required for the whole-school reform.

2. Training organizers are a group of teachers who fully appreciate the needs for training of teachers and are cognizant with the various problems encountered. They collectively conceptualize the training through identifying the goals and objectives bearing in mind the actual situations and the needs of the teachers as well as the school. They also serve as trainers in some cases.

3. Trainers are teachers endowed with knowledge and outstanding capability of applying the learner-centered approach required for the education reform. Being knowledgeable and creative and with expertise in teacher development, they are accepted and win the respect of their peers.

4. Trainees are those who are genuinely interested and volunteer to receive training.

5. Training Period is at the direction of the organizers and the trainers. The training, however, should be long-term and be on a regular basis and continued until achievement of the desired objectives. The training schedule should be flexible and an activity can be organized on the hour/day suitable to

trainers and trainees alike e.g. during the holidays, in the morning before class begins, after lunch or after class.

6. Training Content depends on the needs of the school and the trainees. However, it should meet the National Educational Guidelines following Chapter 4 of 1999 National Education Act which focuses on learning reform.

7. Training Venue. The training will take place mostly in the school and even in the classroom itself for authentic situation, suitable learning sources in the community of the school could also be availed of.

8. Budgetary Requirements. The necessary budget for teacher development is included in the annual school work plan. Moreover, individual teachers who apply for training must be provided subsidy for self-development.

9. Evaluation will be made before, during and after the training.

10. Training Model. The trainers will use the School-Based Training Model which is comprises of;

10.1 A “PDCA Model” is provided as a general guide to implement learning reform.

10.2 “Kalyanamitta Model” or “Amicable Supervision” is based on Buddhist’s Principles and aimed at providing helpful guidance or advice for fellows with mutual understanding and need of improvement of learning process. The “Kalyanamitta Model” has 4 components as follows: (Sumon Amornviwat, 2003):

(1) “Haijai” : Appreciation of the need for teacher development. Trainers won the respect of their colleagues before training.

(2) “Ruamjai” : Participatory Process or Collaboration between trainers and trainees who work closely together as a team. Both parties always use two-way communications through out the training programme.

(3) “Tangjai” : Commitment of all in their determination to amend weaknesses and to work toward further improvement for better quality to teaching and learning; and

(4) “Perdjai” : Open-mindedness resulting in readiness for self-improvement. The training proceeds in a friendly atmosphere.

**Table I – Model of the School-Based Training (SBT)
for In-service Teacher Development**

Process	Methodology	Practitioner/ Responsible Persons
1. P (PLAN)	- Meeting for collective planning for school-based training of teachers	Principal/Academic Affairs Staff/ Training Organizers/ Trainers/
	- Identification of problems/ needs for training through questionnaires/Interviews of trainees	Trainers/Trainees
	- Preparation of training project/plan	Trainers/Trainees
2. Organizing training D (DO)	- Organizing training to provide knowledge and understanding of the content agreed upon: a variety of training models are availed of with emphases on practical work and teaching-learning materials	Trainers/Trainees
	- Application of knowledge and appreciation of training content for actual classroom situation	Trainers/Trainees
3. C (CHECK)	- Noting observations of change in classroom, problems or obstacles encountered	Trainees
	- Periodic observation of behavior of trainees and students in accord with the training programme; preparing a summary of observations	Trainers
	- Collective consultation for analysis of the observations made and problems identified; collective recommendations for improvement of teaching-learning activities	Trainers/Trainees
	- Individual consultation for person-to-person enquiry/conversation at times convenient to both parties; trainers will regularly provide advice/recommendation for enhanced teaching-learning activities	Trainers/Trainees
	- Concluding meeting/organizing an exhibition/exchange of learning /discussion to obtain recommendations and evaluation of the training conduction	Principal/Academic Affairs Staff/ Training Organizers/ Trainers/
4. A (ACTION)	- Analysis and findings; identification of problems and deficiencies - Meeting for improvement which will be beneficial to planning for subsequent training	Principal/Academic Affairs Staff/ Training Organizers/ Trainers/

N.B. : The processes of “Kalyanamitta Model” or amicable supervision and PDCA will be availed of all stages of training. (OEC, 2004)

V. Conditions for success required the following :

1. Genuine interest and support on the part of the school leadership:
2. Trainers are component learning reform change agents who have been well trained,
3. The Office of the Educational Service Areas must be ready to cooperate
4. The main objective of SBT is to create learning reform change agents for further expansion of the learning reform network; and
5. Central agencies should prepare the necessary teacher development manuals for distribution to the schools.

VI. Conclusion.

The Office of the Educational Council has put great efforts in the preparation of the Guidelines for School-Based Training by benefiting from extensive documentary research as well as the experiences of teacher development projects of motional importance. The Ministry of Education recently gave its approval to the Strategic Plan for Teacher Development. It is hoped that the concept and information provided in this paper would be of great use to move forward learning reform and the SBT Model would be adopted on a nationwide basis.

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