

A Study of the Problems and Demands of Community Leaders' Training in the Upper Northeastern Region

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Abstract—This research is aimed at studying the nature of problems and demands of the training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region of Thailand. Population and group samplings are based on 360 community leaders in the region who have experienced prior training from the Udonthani Rajabhat University. Stratified random samplings have been drawn upon 186 participants. The research tools is questionnaires. The frequency, percentage and standard deviation are employed in data analysis. The findings indicate that most of community leaders are males and senior adults. The problems in training are associated with the inconveniences of long-distance travelling to training locations, inadequacy of learning centers and training sites and high training costs. The demand of training is basically motivated by a desire for self-development in modern knowledge in keeping up-to-date with the changing world and the need for technological application and facilitation in shortening the distance to training locations and in limiting expensive training costs.

Keywords—Community leaders, Distance Training, Management, Technology.

I. INTRODUCTION

NATIONAL economic and social development amid the rapid change of globalization has been a crucial factor in the increase of national competitiveness and steadfastness. In reaching this condition, There is the realization of the necessity for “human” and “human quality” development. For Thailand, the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001) served as a turning point in National development planning and a reform plan In terms of the emergence of new thinking and emphasis on social values which called for participatory actions from every sector in the society and made it a “human-centered development”. The 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006) brought in the “philosophy of sufficiency economy” as a guiding principle for national development along ; with a paradigm of development of an integrated whole intended to fulfill the “human-centered development”.

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Fig. 1 The Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy

For several decades, public and private sectors and organizations have expressed their keen interest in human resource development which is extremely important for organizational development. Organizations must search and develop knowledge, competency and capability of their members and maintain their physical and psychological fitness to work and live a happy life [5]. One way towards personal development or human resource development is to rely on training, a process which consumes much less time than classroom instructions. Training brings forth a systematic change and development of skills and attitude through learning experience in a short period of time to increase efficiency in the activities and practice which helps achieve work purposes in organizational situations. Thus, the personnel are equipped to know-how and capability to work competently [1].

Since personnel play an important role in organizations, it is imperative that they receive proper training. In local situations, these people are community leaders who are socially well-accepted within local communities.



Fig. 2 Community leaders

Primarily, community leaders are well-versed in the art and science of persuasion that brings about people's participatory actions to push their work effectively towards group purposes [7]. Training is a useful thing which educates community leaders who will share their experiences further in their local communities.



Fig. 3 Community leader training

In the findings, geographical features become one of the impacting factors in the community leader training, particularly for those living in the upper northeastern region. There are the terrains with mountainous plateau and plains where most people rely on agricultural occupations. Their products are not plentiful due to the sandy ground carrying inadequate water and oftentimes they experience extremely dry seasons. More often than not, the agricultural products become inadequate for their living necessity. This results in their poverty. The people's way of life is country side-oriented, far-distant from cities and a lack of transportation and communication inconveniences.

The researcher has been motivated to study these problems and demands of training for the community leaders in the upper northeastern region with a view to apply the findings to improve the manner in which the training has been carried out in the region.



Fig. 4 Northeastern topography

II. METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes a descriptive method. Population for samplings is the 360 community leaders in the upper northeastern region who passed through training from Udonthani Rajabhat University. The researcher determines the group samplings in accordance with Krejcie & Morgan's table [4] drawn from 186 people with the application of stratified samplings [6]. The group samplings are divided into three categories : Udon Thani, Nong Khai and Nong Bua Lamphu Provinces. The divisions follow proportionate and respective sizes of the groups of community leaders in each province. Simple random samplings are drawn from a list of communities leaders to meet the sample size.

Research tools in this endeavor are composed of the questionnaires broken down into three parts in the following manner. The first part is questionnaires involving general data of community leaders in the upper northeastern region relating to sex, age and levels of education. The second part is questionnaires delving into problems related to the training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region. The third part is questionnaires dealing with the demands of training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region. The questionnaires in the second and third parts are the types of choices based on the standard of 5 rating scales according to Likert's scales, i.e., most, very, moderate. Lowest and least. Equivalent to numbers 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively. All the questionnaires have been approved by a panel of 5 experts and tested for the reliability with α -coefficient of 0.93.

Data Collection is performed with respect to group samplings derived from the two methods, i.e., direct collection by the researcher and collection done by the students of Udonthani Rajabhat University.

Data analysis is performed with the following major aspects :

- 1) answers from the respondents on general information with the particular instrument of frequency and percentage and
- 2) data analysis related to the thinking relating to problems and demands of training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region with the application of statistical means and standard deviation.

III. CONCLUSION

The resulting analysis of the problems and demands for training of the community leaders in the upper northeastern region are divided into three parts.

1. For the general data from the respondents, the findings indicate that there are more male than female participants, most of them above 45 years of age, and with education below a bachelor's degree.

2. The problems in the training for the community leaders in the upper northeastern region are shown in the table1.

TABLE I
PROBLEMS RELATED TO TRAINING

No	Item	\bar{X}	S.D.	Range
1	Inadequacy of learning centers and training sites	4.63	0.53	2
2	Limited public relations	4.31	0.74	7
3	Insufficient support	4.39	0.71	5
4	Training takes too long	4.51	0.65	4
5	Inconveniences in long-distance travelling	4.71	0.48	1
6	Too many participants in training	4.28	0.75	8
7	Learned know-how not further applied in real situations	3.81	0.47	13
8	High costs in training participation	4.55	0.60	3
9	Insufficient training events	4.32	0.74	6
10	Nervousness and fear of expressing oneself	4.10	0.42	11
11	Difficulty in following fast-speaking lecturers	4.08	0.43	12
12	Lack of a variety of activities	4.13	0.41	10
13	Too much academic presentation	4.15	0.41	9
14	Lack of cooperation among trainees	3.60	0.49	15
15	Too much difficult evaluation forms	3.72	0.62	14
Total		4.22	0.56	-

From Table I, the findings clearly point out to the most problematic in the following 4 items : 1) inconveniences in long-distance travelling (to the training locations), 2) inadequate learning centers and training sites, 3) high costs in training participation and 4) training taking too long. As for the other queries, the respondents give high mark scales in all of them.



Fig. 5 Community leader training

3. For the demands of training for the community leaders in the region, the findings are shown in the Table II.

TABLE II
DEMANDS FOR THE TRAINING

No	Item	\bar{X}	S.D.	Range
1	Support from other organizations	3.89	0.58	9
2	Ability to really apply practical knowledge	4.52	0.68	6
3	Ability to transfer knowledge to others	4.41	0.70	7
4	Development in keeping up-to-date with modern knowledge corresponding to changes in the modern world	4.79	0.45	1
5	Need to emphasis on group activities	3.53	0.53	15
6	Technological application learned from training held in local areas in order to save long- distance travelling	4.75	0.52	2
7	Serious attention in training	4.16	0.42	8
8	Decrease in and saving form high costs in training	4.69	0.57	3
9	Shorter training corresponding to the needs of communities	4.53	0.64	5
10	More flexible training including emphasis on knowledge exchanges	4.65	0.64	4
11	Good training environment with proper tools and equipment	3.80	0.58	12
12	Transferring of practical knowledge with case of communication	3.83	0.59	11
13	A various kinds of training	3.84	0.61	10
14	Accurate valuation based on real performance	3.58	0.52	14
15	Training certificates	3.74	0.56	13
Total		4.18	0.57	-

From Table II, the findings indicate the high level of demands in the “most” category respectively in the following six items. The first is the development in keeping up-to-date with modern knowledge corresponding to changes in the modern world. The second is the technological application learned from training held in local areas in order to save long-distance travelling. The third is the decrease in and saving from high costs in training. The fourth is the requirement for more flexible training including emphasis on knowledge exchange. The fifth is the requirement for shorter training corresponding to the needs of communities. And the sixth is the ability to really apply the practical knowledge in real situations.

IV. DISCUSSION

1. From the category of general data, the findings reveal that most of the community leaders are males with education below a bachelor’s degree and they are in advanced ages. Therefore. How to succeed in training for the community leaders in the upper northeastern region in a good fashion is ultimately necessary to apply the principle and theory

concerning adult learning in training circumstances [3]. The author suggests that the principle of adult learning consists of the following components : 1) adults learn well when they have the desire, 2) adults learn only what they need to, 3) adults learn by doing, 4) problem-centered is the basis for adult learning and 5) adults learn well in the friendly atmosphere.

2. From the category of problems of training, the findings tell that the participants face with the inconveniences in long distance travelling to training locations. Inadequacy of learning centers and training sites, high costs in training participation and the length of time in training ; as being the most respectively problematic. The explanation of this research refers to the community leader's hometown locations scattering over far-distance. Isolated areas, all of these create problems and obstacles to training participation. Therefore, there is a genuine need to find the solution in ways of bringing applicable resources and technology available in the localities to properly and optimally utilize in a training setting.

3. From the category of the demands of training. Most of the community leaders much want to participate in training near their own living quarters or local communities in order to save the time and long-distance travelling. At the same time, such the demands can reduce the high costs of training. Regarding the solution to the above-mentioned problems, Kamron Srinoy, 2006 [2] suggests that it is necessary to introduce the technological management principle to alleviate the said demands. The principle consists of the following elements : 1) appreciative and efficient use of resources, 2) technological, innovative creation, 3) suitable technological adaptation and 4) reduce costs, improve productivity. It is suggestible that the technological principle calls for utilization of existing resources in locality to bring the highest benefit in building future strong and sustainable communities.

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