The Contemplative Education Learning Environment Management Model for Undergraduate Students

Sukhamit Komanee, Faculty of Education, Mahasarakam University, Thailand
Suttipong Hoxsuwan, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Mahasarakam University, Thailand
Songsak Phusee-on, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Mahasarakam University, Thailand

ABSTRACT

This research had the objective to study the learning environment component with contemplative education concept. It had been developed and studied the result of using the model. The research had 3 phases as follows.

Phase 1 was to study learning environment with contemplative education concept by (1) studying documents (2) survey (3) participating observation (4) in-depth interview. Phase 2 was develop learning environment management model consisting of 4 processes including (1) model analysis (2) model synthesis (3) model creation and (4) model evaluation. Phase 3 was to study the result of using model.

From the research result it was found that
1. learning environment components with contemplative education consists of 5 components including (1) learners (2) instructor (3) process (4) culture and (5) relation
2. learning environment management model of 2 contexts including (1) philosophy (2) mission (3) goal (4) principle and (5) objective. There were 3 inputs including (1) factors on learning environment component with contemplative education concept (2) learning supporting factor and (3) learning subject factor. There were 7 operating processes including (1) goal analysis (2) specification of desired characteristics (3) planning of learning environment management (4) specification of learning environment method (5) creation and development of activity set (6) usage of activity set and (7) evaluation. Output was desiring characteristics according to contemplative learning concept. There were 5 characteristics including (1) self-awareness (2) compassion (3) public consciousness (4) holistic thinking skill and (5) connections of things and feedback. There were 2 feedbacks including (1) feedback information reflecting learning of activity learners in each time (2) data from evaluation of desiring characteristics with contemplative education.
3. the result of using model, it was found that the desiring score according to contemplative education of students after learning environment management model was higher than before the management of learning environment with statistical significance of 0.05.

Keywords: contemplative education, learning environment management

INTRODUCTION

The influence of globalization had made the expansion of relation to go on greatly. It overcame space and time. The world was smaller and could spin faster. Human from every part of the world could communicate to one another and this would lead to advanced society on the foundation of innovation, economics and emerging culture.
In Thailand, there was risk management of the society change in order to make the national economic and social development plan No. 11 (B.E. 2555-2559) which had clearly indicated that Thailand was facing on the virtue and ethics (the office of national economic and social development No. 2010) which was consistent with Prawet Wasee (2009) which had said that nowadays people lived independently and they took on foreign culture without filtering and this reduced the virtue and ethics. Families lacked warmth. Thai society continued in a way that lost equilibrium between material and spiritual dimension and was at the brink of moral collapse.

While many sectors with the responsibility in development human resource especially the government that have direct responsibility had tried to drive through educational system which could be seen from the objective and the principle of the National Education Act B.E. 2542, section 6 which stated that the educational management must be for developing Thai people so that they would be complete human on both mind and body, intelligence, virtue, ethics and culture in living their lives and could live with other people peacefully (Ministry of Education 2011) and from making National Education Plan (revised edition B.E. 2552-2559) which focused on developing people and Thai society all around and in a balance way in order to be foundation of development with the target to make Thai people decent, good, happy and to have academic knowledge and professional capability and love learning and finding knowledge continuously for the rest of their lives and to have complete body and mind. They must be able to work and stay with other people happily according to sufficiency economy principle and to focus on creating Thai society so that it would be a society with virtue, intelligence and learning and to develop social environment in order to be the foundation in developing people and create society with intelligence and learning (Office of Educational council secretary, 2010: website).

However, the reflective result and what appeared in Thai society including the trend of the world society in the future had shown that the educational system cannot develop people to have knowledge and virtue and to live a happy live and the question that happens was what to do that everyone would have the best learning, the learning for independence, the learning that would create happiness for themselves and others, the learning that would develop potential of learners to have knowledge along with virtue and ethics.

Contemplative learning was education that created a new vision to life and humanity. It focused on cultivating realization in oneself, compassion and conscience to general people. Utilizing philosophy and religion to develop the mind and train oneself until one has conscience and intelligence can connect the various knowledge and apply them to be beneficial to oneself, others and society (Royal Institute 2008:88). Contemplative intelligence is a new thing for Thai society and education. It is a concept that would revive education to be education that develops learners in order to create equilibrium regarding knowledge and mind as it should be in order to be a person with good virtue and to know oneself and to understand other people and can live together and to have lives that would create benefit with the society happily. From the said concept and expectation, it had made many organization and educational institution to use the contemplative concept and to apply it tangibly by going through activity, learning, daily activity, activity on spirit including research process in order to find knowledge, concept, philosophy, format and method in managing contemplative learning.

Educational technology is another important part in managing contemplative learning because educational technology is the knowledge in educational development and passing on knowledge from instructors to learners with the concept from (1) physical science concept. It is an application of physical science and engineering technology in order to use in learning media by emphasizing learners as a large group (2) the concept on behavioral science which is an application of the principle of psychology,
sociology and anthropology and mix it with scientific production and engineering and to manage learning activity for learners to be able to learn in order to change the learning behavior of learners efficiently by emphasizing on instruction design and (3) illuminating science concept is a new concept that uses enlightenment principle and epistemology in the management, the change behavior, development of technique and method, communication, environmental management that emphasizes on spiritual environment that uses compassion as a foundation (Chaiyong Promwong. 2012 : website)

By the said reason, it made the research interested to study the component and development of environmental model according to contemplative education in order to develop Optimum Learning State. As for undergraduate students that would make the learners to have desiring characteristics according to the contemplative education concept is to cause basic change in oneself and to know their own mind and to know the truth and change conscience, change viewpoint relating to human and nature and to cause understanding to oneself and others and to understand the connection of things and to have integrated concept skill and they would have compassion, humbleness in themselves and conscience to the society.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is research and development which has been divided into 3 phases as follows.

Phase 1 to study the learning environment component with contemplative education concept including
1. Study document, principle, concept, theory and research work relating to environment and contemplative education concept
2. Survey environment that helps the learning management and learning environment component with contemplative education concept from the sample group which is students in bachelor degree level of state university in Northeastern region in the amount of 390 people. The tool used in collecting the data was questionnaire.
3. Participating observation of learning environment management with contemplative education concept from a chosen sample project in the amount of 7 projects. The tools used in collecting the data was participating observation record.
4. Regarding the in-depth interview, from a sample group who are people with qualifications and experts in the amount of 10 people. The tools used in collecting the data was in-depth interview.
5. Synthesis of the component of learning environment condition with contemplative education concept

Phase 2 the development of learning environment management model with contemplative education concept for undergraduate students. It had developed for 4 steps according to the system method including (1) analysis (2) synthesis (3) creation and (4) evaluation of learning environment management model with contemplative education concept for undergraduate student. The tools used in collecting the data in phase 2 are (1) evaluation form of learning environment management model with contemplative education concept for university students (2) model evaluation of learning environment with contemplative education concept for undergraduate students

Phase 3 Study the result of using learning environment management model with contemplative education concept for undergraduate students by testing the model with the sample group who are bachelor degree students in educational technology and communication, faculty of education, Mahasarakham University in the number of 18 people. The tools used is learning environment management model with contemplative education concept for undergraduate students including (1) 5 sets of activity set and (2) evaluation form of desiring characteristics of contemplative education concept
RESULT

Research result is divided into 3 steps according to the research time as follows.

1. Regarding the studying result of component of learning environment with contemplative education concept which has been studied from documents, principle, concept, related theory, survey, study, participating observation and in-depth interview in order to analyze to have components of learning environment with contemplative education concept as follows.

1.1 Regarding learner, learners according to contemplative education concept means people who believes and accepted the truth of themselves and ready to exchange knowledge and develop themselves continuously through various learning process with humbleness, respect and understanding of other people.

Basic characteristics are (1) understand and accept the truth about oneself and others (2) ready to exchange knowledge with the group and cultivating and develop self efficiency (3) humble and have manners (4) to have conscience to the public and to be part of that society

The role of the learners are (1) to give cooperation in learning activity (2) to make an understanding with the process, condition, and learning content (3) to be brave to reveal oneself by thoughts, speaking and action

1.2 Teacher or facilitator according to contemplative education concept means people who pass on the knowledge by using diverse process skill to learners with love, compassion, understanding, support and help create potential and to provide environment promotes knowledge to learners.

Basic characteristics is (1) to have knowledge on theory, principle, method and teaching format (2) to have wide vision and listen to different opinions (3) to have skill and ability in arranging and operating learning process (4) to have good personality and interpersonal skill, to be humble and friendly (5) believes in Buddhism and confident in oneself and brave enough to face and get oneself into unexpected circumstance (6) must know how to analyze the learners and see the circumstance in every direction (7) Train oneself all the time (8) Value and treat everybody with fairness

The role of the teachers was (1) to have the role in creating the process in a way of installing the process for learners (2) to be a leader and participate in the learning after process installation (3) communicate with learners in polite, mind and friendly manner and use the most efficient words (4) create atmosphere and cooperation with learners (5) must be the mind shelter for learners and must be strong, lovely, respectable and can give confidence and trust to learners (6) must lead a question in order to open the area and stimulate learners to express opinion, feeling, knowledge to the learning point.

1.3 The process according to contemplative education concept means learning steps that emphasizes the learners to have a deep change in the learners, emotion, feeling, thought, belief and attitude which consists of 3 main steps including (1) adjustment of the condition or preparation by the learners and teachers which are cooperation in creating learning environment and creating relationship for relaxation, trust and safety space for one another (2) learning activity operation procedure is the step that emphasizes learners to participate and operate by oneself in finding method, answers and find information and then contemplate. The teachers/facilitator will provide convenience and recommend (3) conclusion process is a reflection learning steps after performing in the learning activity process. The learners, teachers/facilitators would cooperate. It would reflect learning experience of learners by themselves and exchange it to one another in the point of feeling, thought and knowledge that happens with themselves and the viewpoint to others.
1.4 Culture according to contemplative education concept means the learning potential and joint learning process by material (material culture), organization (organization culture), method (ritual, tradition) and dimension (thinking, belief, understanding, idealism) of culture and let the learners, group/community to create the format and co-existence in arranging contemplative education. The culture is (1) the tool in preparing or adjusting learners before entering into joint learning process by using material culture, organization culture, method culture and dimension culture in connecting the adjustment of belief, attitude, perception and value of learners, learning group and community (2) create new culture when there is gathering of the group/learner community and joint work as knowledge exchange team through the various activity under structure, regulation, rule, objective and joint target of the group/community which would make members to develop themselves, to understand themselves and others for survival of the group/community so there is cultivation of culture of the group/community again.

1.5 Relation according to contemplative education concept means the relation, bond, interaction in any way of a person to a person, a person to a group, a person to community, a person to society, a person and belief system, person and learning information including a person and environment which creates a result to the learning.

2. Regarding the result of developing learning environment management model according to contemplative education concept for undergraduate students can develop in 4 processes according to the system method including analysis, synthesis, creation and evaluation of learning management model with contemplative education concept for undergraduate students.

From the figure 1, the model component is (1) context which is to specify the scope, direction and various operation in developing the model so that it would consistent with desiring concept including philosophy, mission, goal, principle and objective (2) input factor (3) process (4) Output and (5) feedback. From the evaluation result, it was found that qualified people have opinion on the learning environment management model with contemplative education concept for undergraduate students in the overall picture in a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.09$). When considering in each aspect it was found that the suitability of the target is in the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.57$). The rest is the suitability of the context, suitability of input factor, suitability of process, suitability of the result, suitability of feedback and consistency of the model of qualified people is in a high level and experts have the opinion on activity set of learning environment management model with contemplative learning concept for university student in a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.25$). When considering according to structure of activity set in each aspect it is found that the suitability of the learning environment management is in the highest level in 3 aspects including psychology, society and information ($\bar{x} = 4.66$) and the consistency of teacher activity set (role) and the activity operation method is in a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.66$) The rest is suitability of activity set structure, suitability of physical environment management, suitability of process, suitability of operation, suitability of conclusion, experts have opinion in a high level.
Figure 1: Showing the contemplative education learning environment management model for undergraduate students (CELEM-Model)
3. The result of using the contemplative education learning environment management model for undergraduate students

The table comparing desiring characteristics according to contemplative learning concept before-after making learning environment management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>score</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(\bar{x})</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32.20</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>5.932*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37.04</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* having statistical significance at 0.05.

From the table it was found that the desiring characteristics according to contemplative education concept of learners after the learning environment management is higher than before the learning environment management with statistical significance of .05.

**DISCUSSION**

From the research result, there is interesting point to discuss as follows.

1. From the research result of component of learning environment with contemplative education concept

   Learners are important component in learning environment management with contemplative learning concept (Pracha Hutanuwat and Tipkesorn Boonampai. 2012: Interview). Learners must have basic characteristics which are to understand oneself and accept themselves positively and negatively and to understand others. They are the most important foundation in starting to change oneself (Thana Nilachaikowit and Adisorn Chansook. 2009: 54). Moreover, learners should have humbleness and manners. These characteristics would make learners to reduce their ego and lead to opening up the foundation, basic independence and open to listening and respect inner nature of others (thinking, feeling, and attitude) including learners and teachers. The respect for each person will create cooperation in a wide area and relationship between human (Rudolf Steiner. 2008: 254) consisting with the conclusion of Arther Zajonc which stated that the respect is the foundation of contemplative learning concept (Arther Zajonc. 2013:266).

   Regarding teachers, good teachers must consist of knowledge, teaching method and inner part of teachers (inside of teachers). They are important to connect with learners. (Parker J Palmer, referring from Wisit Wangwinyoo. 2010: 216). The basic characteristics on knowledge of teachers include knowledge, wisdom, theory, principle, method and a format to teach or manage the process as teachers. To have knowledge in the matter that they are teaching clearly and can see it from the beginning to the end. It is the knowledge from practice and self training and profound contemplation and become embodied knowledge. It is an important foundation to enable passing knowledge to learners clearly and can show learners the truth and point that has never been seen before regarding the truth in things and the truth in oneself. This created contemplation in various level deeply There is upgrade of knowledge in order to cause self change of learners (Thana Nilachai Kowit and Adisorn Chansook. 2009: 121).Regarding psychology, teachers must have good personality and interpersonal skill and must be humble and friendly because teachers are mind shelter and ready to provide help to learners always (Surang Kowtrakool. 2010 : 285) which is consistent with Wijarn Panit which found that a good teacher must pay attention to learners and have skill in detecting reduction of inspiration of learners and then increase it (Wijarn Panit 2010 : 76). Moreover, the basic characteristics of learners must have wide open attitude and listen to different opinions and believe in Buddhism and to have self-confidence, alert, face
the fear and face unexpected circumstance. The openness will affect other characteristics of teachers. It would make in-depth learning which can be seen as it is and does not hide and enable one to accept potential of other people and to create safety, trust and would lead to equality and create good atmosphere and good relationship and this would enable learners to be ready to change their internal world (feeling, thinking, attitude, belief) in their own frame.

Regarding the process, contemplative learning concept is participating learning process and teachers must use atmosphere that is friendly and safe to one another, adjusting the condition or preparation is the first important step. The said atmosphere can be made in physical aspect including to adjust the place to be consistent with the learning context in that matter, arranging of seats, light, sound and temperature (Arsomsilp Institute. 2012 : Participating observation) and imagination aspect including check-in of learners or to use activity that makes learners to feel safe and trusting (Kwan Pan Din institute. 2012 : Participating observation) Apart from preparation by arranging environment there is some ritual in order to create the feeling of equality, value and dimension of sacredness and make learners to open that learning area. The normal life will learn all the time. The life will be ready to accept new information. (Wisit Wangwinyoo and colleague. 2007: 75). As for learning activity operation, learners would have the role to have direct experience with that thing as if to put themselves in the thing that they are learning in order to have tacit knowledge and consistent with the opinion of Seksan Prasertkul that to find intimate knowledge without going though undivided symbol between people who know and the people who will know is the first condition of spiritual growth (Seksan Prasertkul. 2010 : 78) while teachers have the role of supporting the learners to learn and the fact that the learners have experiential learning will help learners to face with the emotion, feeling, self thinking that happens with the learners and to have in-depth understanding according to contemplative learning concept that emphasizes direct experience (feeling, thinking, belief, attitude to oneself/to the world) mainly (Chumpol Poolpatatarchewin. 2009 : 97) and the conclusion procedure as a reflection learning. After doing in the learning activity by learners, teacher/facilitator cooperate and exchange information on experience in the viewpoint of feeling, thinking and knowledge that happens to oneself including attitude to others via Dialogue method and Deep Listening.

Culture aspect is the most important thing of human. If there is no culture, human would lose the quality of being human and social animal. The culture happens from learning potential and creates format and the usage of symbol language (Srisak Wallipodom. 2010: 377). Culture has the foundation from learning and experience in maintaining the life of human on different natural condition (Yook Sriariya. 2012: 25). The culture presents a tool in contemplative learning concept in the aspect of method (ritual, tradition). Nuttarote Wangwinyoo has created and applied the ritual used with the learning as an activity (1) for self-awareness with the present while there is participation and giving of meaning (2) to help accessing the sacred dimension of a new life (3) ritual will help create soft quality and can see various things in connected way and (4) If one can develop a ritual that is easy and can be reached non-superficially and not too complicated, it would help seducing people to participate more. However, the application to use a ritual must consider condition or specific factor in the environment and culture in order to create suitability and efficiency (Nattarote Wangwinyoo. 2007: 260). The sample of ritual is many thanking and apologizing rituals.

Regarding the relationship of contemplative education concept it has placed importance to the relationship of teachers and learners because relationship is the beginning of trust and open the safety area, feeling of security which is important conditions for learning. The bond that helps learning is the fact that when we have interacted with a person, a group, a thing or to any incident in a way of bonding or
becoming one of that thing and without the feeling of anything between. The trust of one person to another person will create the development area in that person (Wisit Wangwinyoo. 2010: 391) which is consistent with the concept of Pongprasert Hoxsuwan and Pracha Hutu nuwat which mentions the learning management with contemplative education method and should use the friendliness between learners and teachers and learners themselves (Pongprasert Hoxsuwan and Pracha Hutu nuwat. 2012 : Interview). A real friend is a friend who helps you sincerely without anything in return and to be a friend who hopes well (Pra Prom Kunakorn 2011 : 276) and have 7 qualities of a real friend (1) lovely with compassion and attracting people (2) Respectable with strong behavior and can be relied on and gives the feeling of warmth and safety (3) be a good example and people would speak of with pride (4) can talk efficiently, know how to explain and can give good advance (5) can put up with words and ready to listen to questions and recommendations, critique and does not get angry easily (6) can explain deep and complicated things easily and can learn even more complicated things (7) does not persuade for nonsense or bad things

REFERENCES


