

## Teaching ability development through professional learning community : A case study of teacher for local development project on induction period in Thailand

Siriwan Janjang<sup>1</sup>, Chanarak Vetsawat<sup>1</sup>, Pariya Pariput<sup>1</sup>, Rattana Panyapa<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Education, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Thailand

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### ABSTRACT

In Thailand, the Teachers Council has implemented the Teachers for Local Development Project. This research is part of the teacher development process in the said project. It was found that 1) factors in developing teachers' teaching ability through professional learning communities included motivation for self-development, 5 components of desirable professional learning communities: role models, administrators, buddy teachers, mentors, and experts; 2) The results with students were as follows: 2 students had performance at a good level, 8 students had performance at a moderate level, and 5 students had performance at a fair level; the results for teachers were found that teachers were empowered and suggested for self-development in terms of analyzing learners and managing individual learning, specifying clear expected learning outcomes, practicing basic skills, using technology as a base, using situations, using questions, using games, applying in real life, practicing, creating a democratic atmosphere for learning, developing a learning ecosystem for lifelong learning; the results for schools and communities were found that there was a professional learning community by exchanging knowledge and suggestions as a guideline for participatory development.

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### *Corresponding Author:*

Rattana Panyapa,

Faculty of Education

Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University

Thailand

Email: rattana.p@ubru.ac.th

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2016, The project aimed at producing teachers for local development was approved by the government of Thailand. The project's goal is to choose deserving and capable candidates to pursue teaching studies at reputable educational institutions. They will be hired as teachers in their native provinces after graduating. The objective is to provide 47,390 new, high-quality teachers to organizations that use teachers between 2016 and 2027. The government sector is investing in the project to produce teachers for local development in the hopes that it will serve as a pilot project to reform the teacher production system, which is a component of the education reform to produce high-quality teachers, aid in raising the standard of instruction in the region, and promote learning management for Thai students to meet international standards. Increased O-NET and PISA test results, 21st-century capabilities, and support for Thailand 4.0 are some of the indicators. It is therefore anticipated that these educators will take the lead in implementing obvious reforms to the nation's educational system.

According to produce a high-quality local teachers who can transform the way students learn and are connected to the local context, a working group headed by the Higher Education Commission is collaborating with the faculties of education and educational studies of higher education institutions to jointly draft a curriculum for developing local teachers. The ability to use technology for teaching and learning, the ability to organize learning by integrating English into subject learning management, the ability to organize learning that is linked to the community to lay the foundation for problem solving and community development, and the ability to create a network for community development to be strong and sustainable in the future are the main characteristics indicating the high quality of local teachers in order to develop relationships with the community (Mahasarakham University, 2017). Faculty of Education, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University has implemented teacher development in the Teachers for Local Development Project by having teachers in the project design learning management and innovation through the concept of knowledge integration.

The curriculum, "Curriculum to develop teachers' abilities in organizing English integrated learning activities for subject learning management (Content and Language Integrated Learning-CLIL), learning that integrates technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge-TPACK)," was created collaboratively by teacher production institutes in the lower northeastern region. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on creating learning activities outside of the classroom that are community-based (Community-based learning) and project-based (Project-based learning)," with the following expectations: (1) Technical Pedagogical Content Knowledge, or TPACK, is the term for learning activities that integrate technical, pedagogical, and content knowledge in order to build the capacity to use technology for teaching; (2) In refining the capacity to oversee subject learning through the use of English (Faculty of Education, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, 2024).

The approach known as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) will be employed, with a focus on designing extracurricular learning activities that are project-based and community-based (Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, 2017). As one of the project's network of institutions for producing teachers in the lower northeast, the Faculty of

Education at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University has consistently carried out teacher development.

According to the findings of the study by Suttipong et al. (2020), coaching and mentoring for new premium teachers to professionals in Thailand are continuous. It shows that the supervisory effects of active learning management by using professional learning communities and social networks for the teachers in the teacher production project for local development in the induction period of the office of basic education school, Phayao province, were to 1) examine the supervision outcomes of active learning management using professional learning communities and social networks for the teachers; and 2) examine the teachers' satisfaction with the supervision of active learning management using professional learning communities and social networks for the teachers in the teacher production project for local development in the induction period. A cohort of 30 educators served as the study's sample. Purposive sampling was used to choose them. A structured interview and a questionnaire using Likert's five-point rating system served as the research instruments. The data were analyzed by using content analysis, inductive analysis, mean, and standard deviation. The findings were as follows: 1. Regarding the supervision outcomes of active learning management by using professional learning community and social network, it consisted of 5 aspects: 1) problems occurred during the learning activity management, 2) the solutions of problems in learning activity management, 3) the outcomes of learning activity management, 4) benefits and limitations of learning activity management, and 5) guidelines for the development of learning activities. 2. The satisfaction of the teacher towards the supervision of active learning management by using professional learning community and social network was at the highest level (Suttipong et al., 2020).

Also, the quality of local development teachers's performance in KamPhaeng Phet province and Tak province had a learning management plan. There were elements that covered the specified criteria, including active learning, teacher skills, coaching, and facilitator. Both technology and English were included in the learning management plan. But some teachers could not write a learning management plan that covered the reflection process including measurement and evaluation were not able to evaluate the learning according to their objectives (Chatwirote, 2021). In addition, the English teachers in Myanmar University need to take part of the responsibility for their professional development. According to them, ongoing professional development is essential in today's world. Teachers' belief in themselves and in what they are doing makes them confident. According to the interview data, Myanmar teachers' preferred PD areas are teaching skills and methods, understanding students, and attending conferences, seminars, and workshops Sein, 2022).

Additionally, Pariput et al. (2024) were tasked with examining the teacher's capacity to instruct throughout the induction phase of the Ubon Ratchathani Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 local development project. According to the project to generate teachers for local development, batch 2022, the target group consisted of seven teachers who work in the Educational Service Area Office school. The research group served as a supervisory team inside this school. A form for assessing teachers' teaching abilities was the research tool. There are five rating levels on it. The learning management strategy for every teacher includes a form to document the observations made about their teaching strategies during the open-

class activity. Both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the data were conducted. In research, statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and content analysis are employed. According to the study's findings, the instructor's overall teaching proficiency for the local development project in the induction period under Ubon Ratchathani Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 was extremely good. The most skilled at integrating CBL are teachers. Teachers have the least ability in integrating CLIL. When making plans for more teacher development, this information is helpful. This research is the first research of the Teachers for Local Development Project. It is conducted using the PLC process combined with the opening of the classroom and the observation of the classroom by the researcher. The outcome is the skills for the target group teachers and students.

## 2. METHOD

This research is a mixed-method research with qualitative and quantitative research. The purpose of this research is to study the causes and effects of the development of teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities in the Local Teachers for Professional Development Project under the Office of Ubon Ratchathani Primary Educational Service Area 3. It is divided into 2 parts as follows:

1. Qualitative research: The target group consists of 6 teachers in the Local Teachers for Professional Development Project (Class of 2022) under the Office of Ubon Ratchathani Primary Educational Service Area 3, 1 school administrator, 3 mentors as educational supervisor, 4 experts as lecturer, 2 co-teachers, 1 model teacher, totaling 17 people. Qualitative data were collected by participant observation. The research instrument was the teachers' teaching behavior observation record form in the classroom opening activity. The data was analyzed using content analysis.

2. Quantitative research: The sample consisted of 15 students in Grade 5 of Ban Chiang Kaew Community School who were specifically selected. Quantitative data were collected by observation using observation record form, and analyzed statistically using frequency, percentage, and content analysis. The research method can be summarized according to the Figure 1.

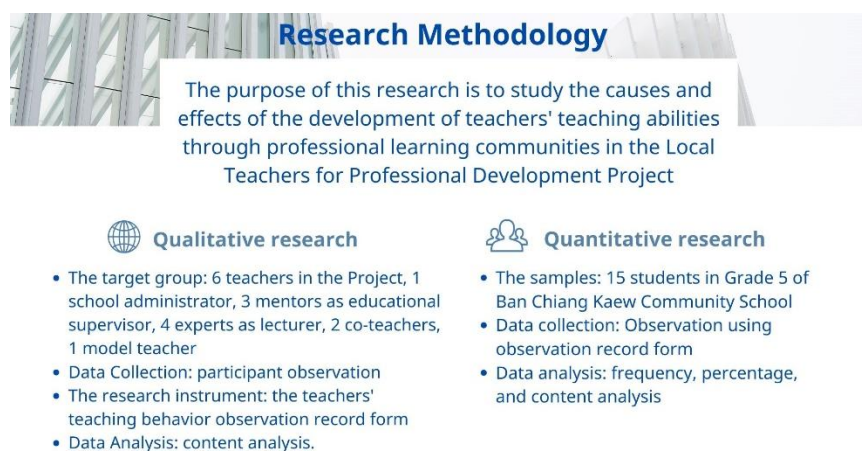


Figure 1 Research methodology

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the qualitative research process, it was found that the factors in developing teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities consist of 1) aspiration for self-development 2) the components of the desired professional learning community, which include model teachers, administrators, buddy teachers, mentors, and experts 3) 3 steps of the good practice: co-planning, co-doing classroom studies, and co-reflecting learning outcomes. Factors in developing teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities can be summarized in the Figure 2.



Figure 2 Developing teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities

This result is consistent with the research results of Professional Learning Community and Guidelines for Application in Educational Institutions conducted by Phuangsomjit (2017) who stated that the professional learning community or PLC is a method used in teacher development by fostering collaborative learning among colleagues within a particular work environment. PLC makes teachers feel that they are not isolated but connected with the network to help improve students' learning. PLC has essential characteristics: good relationship; willingness to work and faith in work; a community of generosity, virtue and academic friendship; and a community moved towards professional changes. In this research, PLC meeting was used to collect data, i.e. before and after the classroom opening activity and classroom observation to summarize the research results. When considering the factors of the steps of the good development process, namely co-planning, co-doing classroom studies, and co-reflecting learning outcomes, (co-reflect), it reflects a good working atmosphere and has a positive effect on teachers' teaching development as the research of Thongjunkaew & Atiwithayaporn (2022) indicated that the factors with the highest means were organizational atmosphere, organizational culture, and organizational structure and the research of Sripunthabun et al. (2023) indicated that factors influencing the formation of professional learning communities in schools consist of five factors; 1) leadership readiness for change by administrators, 2) organizational culture and climate, 3) vision, mission, and strategy alignment, 4) recognition of teacher collaborative abilities, and 5) school structure. In addition to the PLC approach affecting the development of teachers' teaching ability, it also influences

the quality of schools. The research shows development directions, improvement of teacher quality, application of Active learning strategies, and applying the PLC approach.

Sugihartini et al. (2019) also stated that PLC approach is the part of small group discussion, the skill of guiding small group discussion is an organized process by involving a group of students in optimal face-to-face interaction with the aim of various information or experiences of making decisions or solving a problem. In this research, PLC meetings were used to collect data: PLC before the classroom opening activity and classroom observation to allow the model teachers to present the activities and learning management plans in the classroom, and PLC after the classroom opening activity and classroom observation to summarize the learning management activities that were effective for students and the results for teachers in the project. The components of guiding small group discussion skill include Focusing attention, clarifying problems or order of opinions, analyzing students' views, improving students' description, spreading opportunities to participate, and closing discussions.

The results of developing teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities on students consisted of; 1) The results with students were as follows: 2 students (13.33%) had performance at a good level, 8 students (53.33%) had performance at a moderate level, and 5 students (33.34%) had performance at a fair level; 2) The results for teachers were found that teachers were empowered and suggested for self-development in terms of analyzing learners and managing individual learning, specifying clear expected learning outcomes, practicing basic skills, using technology as a base, using situations, using questions, using games, applying in real life, authentic learning, creating a democratic atmosphere for learning developing a learning ecosystem for lifelong learning; 2.3) The results for schools and communities were found that there was a professional learning community by exchanging knowledge and suggestions as a guideline for participatory development (figure 3).

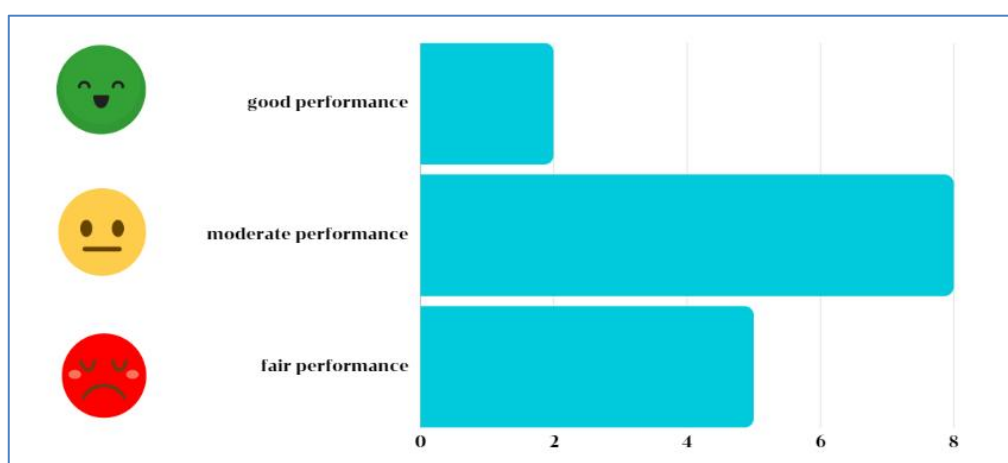


Figure 3 The results of developing teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities on students

Developing teachers' teaching abilities through professional learning communities results in three outcomes: outcomes for students, outcomes for teachers, and outcomes for schools and communities. It is consistent with the research by Insa-ard et al. (2018), found that the professional learning community of practice model consisted of 5 components; external facilitators and inhibitors, internal facilitators and inhibitors, process, characteristics and outcomes.

Moreover, Hiatt-Michael (2001) reflected that the professional learning community is the way of school reform as the research results show that a learning community is one in which all members acquire new ideas and accept responsibility for making the organization work. The educational leader's task is to change the goals of the organization so that learning is rewarded for all participants. Considering the effects on teachers, it was found that teachers were inspired to empower themselves and received suggestions for development in various areas. Addo (2024) shown that strong PLCs contribute to improved teacher collaboration and morale; Mahimuang (2018) stating that professional learning communities have been held considerable engagement for the capacity to sustain improvement in many countries. Although some concerned evidence has suggested their positive impact on school improvement, understanding effective professional learning communities in schools and research into their existence, operation, and effectiveness are still at a relatively early stage of development in many countries, also in Thailand.

The results of the research are consistent with the principles of the professional learning community as stated by DuFour (2004), it is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice. Collaboration can affect achievement only when it is used to pursue clear, explicit achievement goals; that collective restraint must be balanced by creative freedom and that teams are most effective when their instructional accomplishments are recognized and celebrated (Schmoker, 2004). Şahin and Kılıç (2021) explained that the students thought the Learning Model Based on Democratic Life supported their participation, was efficient and interesting, contributed to the formation of a democratic classroom environment, and enabled them to learn democracy in democratic ways. Şanlı & Altun (2015) mentioned that democracy is one of the most accepted ways of governing system in our modern world. In this case, democracy education and establishing a democratic environment at schools are so significant for the students, teachers and administrators.

The effect on schools and communities found that there were professional learning communities through the exchange of knowledge and providing good feedback as a participatory development approach. It is consistent with the research by Çopur & Demirel (2022) explained that the PLC designed in a reflective thinking cycle has had a positive impact on teacher and enhanced student achievement, there is a positive relationship between teacher participation in the PLC and student achievement. Carter (2008) explained that it has the potential to strengthen students' academic achievement. An academic pyramid of interventions, one aspect of PLCs, may be especially helpful in schools where subgroups of students are underperforming relative to other students on standardized testing.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The knowledge from this research consists of two parts: factors in developing teachers' teaching ability through professional learning communities, which include motivation for self-development, elements of desirable professional learning communities: role models, administrators, buddy teachers, mentors, and experts, and three steps of the good development process: co-planning, co-doing, and co-reflecting; and the results of development occur in three parts: outcomes for students, outcomes for teachers, and outcomes for schools and communities. The research results are consistent with the concepts, theories, and research results from many studies, such as working atmosphere as an important factor in teachers' self-development as appeared in many research studies. However, the research process has some limitation: the data was collected by observing a single classroom and may not reflect sustainable results. From the discussion of the research results, future research should be conducted, such as research on professional learning communities and promoting democratic atmosphere in schools, and research on success factors in developing teachers' learning management ability through professional learning communities in schools in ASEAN countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, or Thailand.

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