

The Reflection of Professional Learning Community of Educational Institution Networks focusing on the Sufficiency Economy in Songkhla, Thailand

Rungchatchadaporn Vehachart¹, Dwi Sulisworo^{2,*}, Venus Srisakda³, Orapin Tipdech⁴

¹Department of Educational Administration, Thaksin University, Thailand

²Department of Education Management, Ahmad Dahlan University, Indonesia

³Department of Psychology, Thaksin University, Thailand

⁴Department of Physical and Health Education, Thaksin University, Thailand

Received May 3, 2020; Revised June 6, 2020; Accepted July 7, 2020

Cite This Paper in the following Citation Styles

(a): [1] Rungchatchadaporn Vehachart, Dwi Sulisworo, Venus Srisakda, Orapin Tipdech, "The Reflection of Professional Learning Community of Educational Institution Networks focusing on the Sufficiency Economy in Songkhla, Thailand," *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 8, No. 9, pp. 3851 - 3857, 2020. DOI: 10.13189/ujer.2020.080908.

(b): Rungchatchadaporn Vehachart, Dwi Sulisworo, Venus Srisakda, Orapin Tipdech (2020). *The Reflection of Professional Learning Community of Educational Institution Networks focusing on the Sufficiency Economy in Songkhla, Thailand*. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(9), 3851 - 3857. DOI: 10.13189/ujer.2020.080908.

Copyright©2020 by authors, all rights reserved. Authors agree that this article remains permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License

Abstract This study aimed to describe the professional learning community (PLC) of educational institution networks in Songkhla, Thailand. In this study, the Faculty of Education Thaksin University is in the role of the supervision and monitoring working group that received funds for organizing professional development activities like a professional learning community (PLC). This project was implemented in the educational institution network in Songkhla province for the year 2019. The number of networks is eight, covering one network of educational professionals and seven networks of educational institutions. It involved nine coaches/ mentors divided into three teams who responsible for three networks (Khuang Niang Witthaya School, Ban Radpun School, and Wat Rong School). This study used the assessment tools of the Secretariat Office of the Teachers Council of Thailand. This tool consists of four sets. Those are sets of guidance record form for coaches and mentors, sets of interview forms and interview recording forms, sets of monitoring and evaluation of the performance by the network, and sets of the network performance evaluation form. Based on the finding, the entire teacher networks are writing lesson plans, and the students learn with the principles of moderation. The use of knowledge with awareness and moral responsibility is the basis for decisions and actions in

four dimensions, namely economy, environment, society, and culture in balance.

Keywords Professional Learning Community (PLC), Educational Institution Network, Sufficiency Economy

1. Introduction

The Teachers Council of Thailand, as a professional organization, is aware of teacher development by aiming to develop teachers and educational personnel with regular and professional development. Therefore, it has established guidelines for promoting and supporting various professional development networks of teachers and instructional staff by creating a process of professional development activities in the form of a professional learning community (PLC). It promotes 1) Shared Values and Norms, 2) Collective Focus on Student Learning, 3) Collaboration among members of the professional learning community (Collaboration), 4) Exposure to expert guidance (Study Advice and Study Visit) and 5) discussions that reflect performance (Reflection Dialogue) throughout the process.

PLC is a combination of the synergies of teachers, administrators, and educators in schools to improve the learning of learners. PLC is a place for "interaction" that reduces the "isolation" of members of the school's professional teachers in their work to improve student performance or school academic work [1]. PLC has developed from an organizational strategy that focuses on the organization's ability to adapt to the rapid change of society by starting from the concept of learning organization and adapting to the context [2,3]. Of the school and professional learning together, which has an outstanding job, the learners' responsibility is essential [3]. Education from many schools in Hong Kong 4, United States [2], Singapore [5], conducted in the form of PLC, found good results in the teaching profession and learners who focus on achievement.

The Teachers Council of Thailand has implemented a support network for the professional development of teachers and educational personnel, divided into three levels: a network of the professional level of education, the network of the educational institutions, and network of teacher group members. There are 6,664 teachers, and educational personnel needed to be enhanced [6].

For the fiscal year of 2019, based on the concept of the Teachers' Council on the development of teachers and educational personnel, there should be cooperation partners for enhancing and developing teacher's professionalism. The Teachers Council of Thailand has established a partnership with Chevron Thailand Exploration and Production Company Limited, and Kenan Foundation of Asia to work together and mobilize resources. Besides, the Teachers Council of Thailand has also cooperated with higher education institutions in the area throughout the country to drive and improve the quality of education through the continuous development of teachers and educational personnel. Regarded as the integration of extensive and secure collaboration, the Teachers Council of Thailand expects that the professional integration of teachers and educational personnel with "Professional learning community" will lead to the development of teaching, and administration and institutional reform that leads to the development of students' quality. The quality of education in the 21st-century and the ever-changing challenges of "Professional Learning Community" to maximize benefits for students include creating professional advancement for members to be in line with "professional teacher" for development of effective student learning [7], and development of teacher work to become a professional teacher [8].

A professional learning community is an essential tool in reforming education for sustainable development [9]. It enables sharing common vision, values and norms [10], learning and collaborating to energize [11-13], focus on student learning [14], professional performance reflection [12], leadership in management [15-17]. Leadership for enhancing the professional learning community has two

dimensions: the dimension of executive leadership and teacher leadership.

However, there has not been a comprehensive enough review to see the achievement of this project. Reflections on the implementation of this project can be used for PLC improvement programs in various aspects and communities. Therefore the objectives of this study were:

1. To use the King's wisdom values as a base for learning so that students develop competency on problem-solving skills,
2. To use PLC in designing problem-solving skill development for students in the entire learning areas,
3. To create a community of professional teachers at the educational institutions,
4. To make teachers and students having knowledge and understanding in applying the King's wisdom values to their daily lives.

2. Methods

2.1. Design and Setting

The Secretariat Office of the Teachers Council of Thailand has set up a framework for implementing the five elements of professional learning communities, consisting

1. establishing shared norms and values (Shared Values and Norms),
2. practices that the common goal is to focus on the quality of students (Collective Focus on Student Learning),
3. the cooperation among the members of the Professional Learning Community (Collaboration),
4. open-mindedness, open classroom Expert observation, and study visits,
5. a process to reflect on the results of learning management (Reflection Dialogue) with the following methods.

This project was started from 3 September 2019 to 27 December 2019. The researcher surveyed general information of teachers in three schools in a sample group by setting up teams of 3-5 people from a total of 16 teachers participating voluntarily. Figure 1 shows the Teaching Experience (less than ten years, from 10 to 20 years, from 21 to 30 years, and more than 30 years).

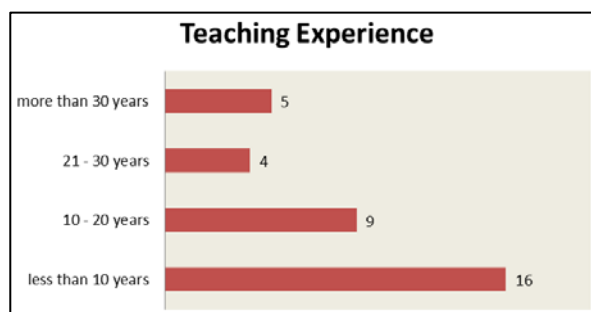


Figure 1. Respondents based on Experience

Figure 2 shows the graph of Position (Administrator, Expert Teacher, and others).

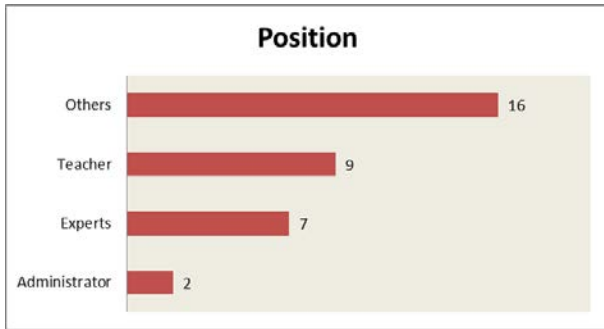


Figure 2. Respondents based on Position

Figure 3 shows the graph of Teacher Majors (Thai language, Physics, English language, Social studies, English language, Childhood, Mathematics, and General sciences).

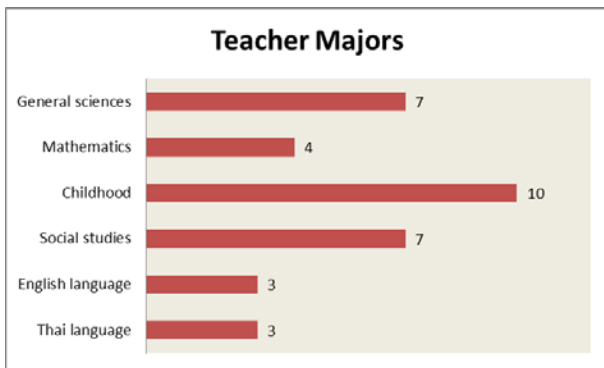


Figure 3. Respondents based on Majors

The Faculty of Education Thaksin University is in the role of the supervision and monitoring working group that received the fund for organizing professional development activities like a professional learning community (PLC) of the educational institution network in Songkhla province for the year 2019.

The number of networks is eight covered one network of educational professionals and seven networks of educational institutions. It consisted of nine coaches/mentors divided into three teams. They were responsible for three educational organization networks: Khuan Niang Witthaya School, Ban Radpun School, and Wat Rong School.

Khuan Niang Witthaya School was focused on the development of students' competency on problem-solving skills by using the concept of the King's wisdom values as a base for learning by using PLC. Ban Radpun School was focused on following the footsteps of father Sufficiency agriculture activities for lunch. Wat Rong School (Khao Prachasan) was focused on integrating the philosophy of the sufficiency economy into the school by using a professional learning community.

This study used the assessment tools of the Secretariat Office of the Teachers Council of Thailand, consisting of

four sets. They are

1. sets of guidance record form for coaches and mentors,
 2. sets of interview forms,
 3. sets of monitoring and evaluation records of network performance by the network, and
 4. sets of evaluation forms of network performance.
- The overview of the network operation methods is as follows.

2.2. PLC Operationalization

There were several phases in conducting the PLC project. Figure 4 shows these phases.

Phase 1: Conducting a meeting to clarify members and team arrangement, the objectives of the project to teachers throughout the school, invite speakers to educate teachers. Regarding the use of the King's wisdom values as a base for learning to develop competency on problem-solving skills of students, the project committee was appointed. The teachers organized a team with a ratio of one model teacher to two to five buddy teachers.

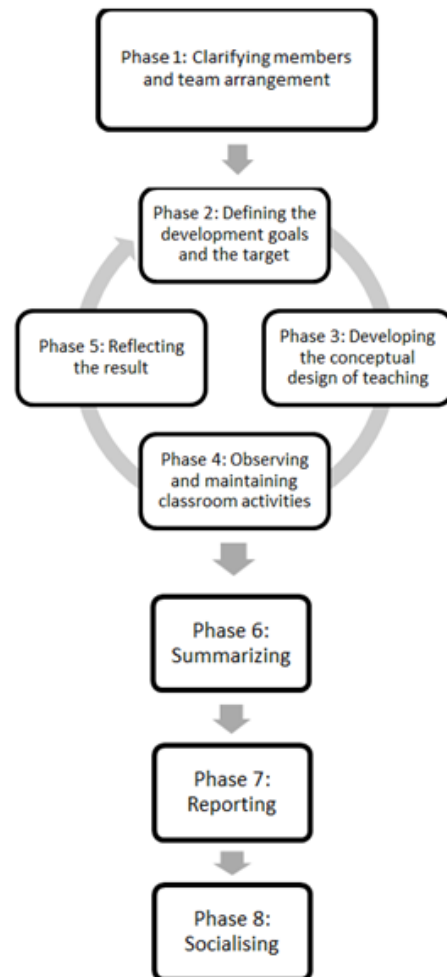


Figure 4. Project Implementation Phases

Phase 2: Defining the development goals and the target.

The target was 80% of the students participate in the classroom activities of this project. During this project, the classrooms were taught using ten model teachers. The model was following King's wisdom values as a base for learning. Teachers conveyed this model in the PLC project to the classroom. They had to develop students' competency, especially on problem-solving skills. As a result, 50% of students have to get improvement in their problem-solving skills.

Phase 3: Developing the conceptual design of teaching. This design was to make more specific activities on students' skills development. The model teacher designed the learning management plan. They explored the curriculum of the educational institution to create the lesson plans. It included teaching strategies, learning standards or indicators and course descriptions, learning goals and objectives, content and methods, media, learning evidence, measurement, and evaluation.

Phase 4: Observing and maintaining classroom activities. Buddy teachers observed the class as agreed. These activities were recording the learning management process, the teaching and learning media used, explaining the beginning and conclusion of the lesson, observing and recording the teacher's attention to the needs of the students, observing and recording the teacher's willingness to create critical concepts for the students, observing and recording the intention of the teacher to develop essential ideas for the students, observing and recording the behavior of the students on the assignment, and the result of using the teaching method as a form of knowledge exchange.

Phase 5: Reflecting the result. When the teaching is finished, the model teacher reflected on their teaching first. What is needed to improve? They identified the successful aspects or aspects that need to be developed. Model teachers came together to reflect the other's teaching. The whole team collaborated to improve the learning management plan. The model teachers applied the updated learning management plan to teach other rooms in the next lesson.

Phase 6: Summarizing. Each team of buddy teachers teamed together to summarize lessons to find innovative solutions, then send them to the school coordinator.

Phase 7: Reporting. The school coordinators send information from all ten teams to the TRAINFLIX system.

Phase 8: Socialising. The working group of the school summarized the project to be sent to the TRAINFLIX system and made it into a picture book sent to the Teachers Council of Thailand.

3. Result and Discussion

In recent decades, the issue of the professional learning community (PLC) has developed quite broadly as one

form of reform in the field of education in various countries [18-20] and also at multiple levels [18,21,22] and scientific field [23-24]. There are several aspects discussed from the results of establishing PLC based on school networks. In several meetings to share the vision and norms of the management, it has ensured that all parties involved, especially the school management and teachers, have understood the project's objectives. In this process, speakers from universities provided training on vision and norms in education in Thailand. The output of this activity is the appointment of ten model teachers to implement activities in their classrooms.

Based on the results obtained during debriefing as volunteers, the model teachers convey in their classrooms to achieve improved student performance on problem-solving skills. More specific activities on developing student skills are carried out by teachers based on the national curriculum. The teacher observed the classroom management. They recorded elements as the basis for learning evaluation, such as media, student needs, critical concepts for learning, behavior, and learning outcomes.

Furthermore, in the inter-school community, the model teacher presents a reflection of learning, proposing various possibilities for improvement. These results are the subject of joint discussion to improve subsequent learning activities in their classrooms. The model teacher applies an updated learning management plan for the next lesson. More detailed impacts on each aspect are as follows.

3.1. Students' Side

The activities develop students to have lasting knowledge, skills to solve problems that can be adapted in daily life. Students have the skills to address the issues and apply the King Sufficiency economy's knowledge used in everyday life. 50% of students show better competency in problem-solving skills.

3.2. Teachers' Side

Teachers see their weaknesses and use the recommendations from their fellows to improve their learning management to be more productive. The King's wisdom values is used as a base for learning management and brings the PLC to the classroom to develop competency on problem-solving skills from the model teacher. The process includes problem determination, designing the lesson, opening the class, and buddy teachers observing the teaching. When teaching finished, the whole team of teachers came together to reflect the teaching and improve the learning management plan then bring it to teach in another class. Besides, to solve teaching and learning management problems together, teachers must search for knowledge and develop themselves all the time to create learning management

processes to be more productive.

Reflecting on teaching practice, the model teacher shared the learning management plan to buddy teachers to improve the learning management plan. The model teacher brought the learning management plan to teach following the program, and buddy teachers observed the teaching. The teaching activities were recorded during the teaching process. The whole team of teachers came together to reflect the teaching and improve the learning management plan and bring it to another room. Each model teacher summarizes the process according to the cycle and sends it to the school coordinator. The quality of learning management that focuses on the success or effectiveness of the learner is crucial, and the happiness of collaboration of community members [10,20].

3.3. Administrators' Side

The director or principal must create awareness for supporting teachers and promote enthusiastic activities about collaborating, creating unity to help each other in a friendly way, proud of being able to work and achieve the objectives with patience and responsibility diligently to complete the purposes of the project. Administrators are interested in academic development and confident in having educational leadership. They actively participate in learning management that is more effective through PLC to improve teaching and learning management continuously and to integrate knowledge in all aspects of school operations, presenting work at a higher level with continuous monitoring and support. This environment is concerning the teacher's professional ethics. Part 2 states, "Teachers shall have love, faith, integrity, and responsibility for the profession and act like a good member of the professional organization." It also is stated in Part 3 that "Teachers shall care for and be merciful to, pay attention to, assist and encourage students and clients following their roles and duties." Besides, Part 4 states, "Teachers shall promote good skills and learning habits to students and clients under the roles and duties to the full capability and generosity."

3.4. Learning Culture at Schools

The communities have confidence and satisfaction in the teaching and learning process, take part in teaching and learning in the sufficiency economy activities, and become a speaker for culture changes. There are more help and generosity to work and more unity in the organization. The management will strengthen the quality of teaching and learning. The communities are brave to comment and reflect on the effect of teaching after observing the teaching communities in school. Parents have more activities with students and learn to solve problems together. Teachers jointly design learning management, and there are more discussions on teaching

and learning management. Cooperation and mutual assistance, like friends, can bring techniques and methods to teach new knowledge to the classroom. The culture provides opportunities for teachers to develop teaching and learning to be more productive jointly.

3.5. Innovation and Awareness

Resulting from the PLC process is a spirit for teachers who are not part of the PLC team to expand the entire school. All subjects have integrated the sufficiency economy with various themes throughout the school. The management can grow the result as an example. It is also able to create networks for schools that are close to each other to encourage the use of the King's wisdom values as a base for learning management together with doing PLC to develop competency on problem-solving skills of students. Teachers use media technology to help in teaching and learning management.

3.6. Supporting factors or Challenging Factors

The supporting factors are proud of being able to work and achieve the objectives with patience and responsibility diligently to complete the purposes of the project. Effective learning management creates a good relationship between the communities and the school as both parties have mutual development. Strengthening the communities creates cooperation between parents and the school in planning the school curriculum. Communities trust educational management. Understanding each others in the PLC program is crucial to attaining professional development [21,25].

3.7. Higher Education Institution Learning

National education policy in Thailand places higher education institutions in several functions. Higher education is not only mandated to educate citizens to become a professional workforce, but also plays a role in the development of knowledge and improving the quality of people's lives through various community programs. Higher education (Thaksin University's Faculty of Education) showed a role in monitoring and developing PLC projects in various forms of activities in school-based communities [6].

This result related to learning, roles, challenges, supervising, monitoring, and evaluation teams. Having a position as a coach and mentor, and taking part in giving advice, guiding following the network action plan make teachers less worried. Field trips can benefit the Sufficiency Economy Project because, in most fieldwork activities, both teachers and students do activities together. Planning together for the first time result in a well-planned implementation, but when it is too short, some events do not reach the result of development to the

final stage. It is recommended to teach students to use it in daily life and also have parents participate in student activities. In the context of the careers of parents that have already been farming, they can be invited to be guest speakers, but when using the online system, they will probably get confused and unable to see the information in lesson plans and activities in the cycle. Teachers do not understand how to use the TRAINFLIX system to send data from each team. The duration of the action (PLC) should be at least one semester for sustainable development so that it allows teachers to improve, correct, and develop tasks correctly. The coaching team should have more time to give advice online.

4. Conclusions

PLC is collaboration and sharing learning among teachers, administrators, and educators based on a friendly relationship and a shared vision, values, goals, and mission. All community members worked together as a learning team. Teachers are a leader in their classrooms. The director is responsible for supporting learning and professional development, changing the quality of the individual to be the quality of learning management. This support emphasizes the success of students and the happiness of working together for the learning community.

The implementation of PLC has good results in the teaching profession and students that focus on the development of students and can be summarized in two aspects. The first aspect is the benefits for teachers. Those are to increase the sense of commitment to the mission and goals of the school by increasing enthusiasm to fulfill the mission and goals through the cooperation of the learning team. The second aspect is benefits for students, which are to increase the potentials of learning based on interests and reduce the rate of repetition and the number of classes that slow down learning management. Encouraging teachers to exchange knowledge in teaching and learning activities can result in higher student achievement, desirable characteristics, good teamwork, and a good understanding of work processes. The operation procedure that must suit the time based on the Teachers Council of Thailand action plan caused a bit error in the implementation. The budget for teaching and learning activities is appropriate. It is according to the needs of each team, meeting to clarify members and organize a group (PLC) to set development goals and student goals on conceptual design, teaching design for students' development, observing class summary of lessons on problem-solving solutions.

There are two consequences of activities. First, students acquire competency in problem-solving skills. Therefore the program to improve students' problem-solving skills is essential. Second, teachers use the PLC in the design of

teaching and learning management by using the concepts of the King's wisdom values as a base for managing learning.

Acknowledgements

The Secretariat Office of the Teachers Council of Thailand. Chevron Enjoy Science Company.

REFERENCES

- [1] Sergiovanni, T. J. (1994). *Building community in schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- [2] Olivier, D. F., & Huffman, J. B. (2016). Professional learning community process in the United States: Conceptualization of the process and district support for schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 36(2), 301-317.
- [3] Wennergren, A. C., & Blossing, U. (2017). Teachers and students together in a professional learning community. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 61(1), 47-59.
- [4] Sun-Keung Pang, N., Wang, T., & Lai-Mei Leung, Z. (2016). Educational reforms and the practices of professional learning community in Hong Kong primary schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 36(2), 231-247.
- [5] Salleh, H. (2016). Facilitation for professional learning community conversations in Singapore. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 36(2), 285-300.
- [6] Secretariat of the Teachers Council of Thailand (2019) Guidelines for the operation of higher education institutions in the role of working group for supervision, monitoring and evaluation of professional development activities like a community of professional learning of networks that receive subsidized professional development activities like a community of professional learning. Meeting documents 2 August 2019
- [7] Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M. & Thomas, S. (2006). Professional learning communities: A review of the literature. *Journal of Education Change*, 7, 221-258.
- [8] Verbiest, E. (2008). *Sustainable school development: Professional learning communities*. Netherland: Fontys University.
- [9] Vescio, V., Ross, D. & Adams, A. (2008). A review of research on the impact of professional learning communities on teaching practice and student learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 80-91.
- [10] Hord, S. M. (2009). Professional Learning Community: Educators work together toward a shared purpose – improved student learning. National Staff Development Council. *Journal of Staff Development*, Winter, 30(1), 40-43.
- [11] Lunenburg, F.C. (2010). Creating a professional learning community. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal*, 27(4), 1-7.

- [12] Mathews, L., Holt, C. & Arrambide, M. (2014). Factors Influencing the Establishment and Sustainability of Professional Learning Communities: the Teacher's Perspective. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 5(11), 23-29.
- [13] Xiao, S. & Saedah, S. (2015). Professional Learning Community in Education: Literature Review.
- [14] Feger & Arruda. (2008). Professional learning communities: Key themes from the literature. United States of America: The Education Alliance, Brown University.
- [15] Siriphan Suwanmankha. (2013). Creating a community of professional learning. By using the guidance process and Being a mentor. Retrieved 25 May 2014, from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v.=aQzyUmQnnQ>
- [16] Kenoyer, F. E. (2012). Case study of professional learning community characteristics in an Egyptian private school. Dissertation, Columbia International University.
- [17] Woralak Choo-kerd, and Akarin Sungthong. (2014). School of Community for Professional Teaching for Develop teacher-centered professions. *Journal of Academic Resources*, Prince of Songkla University, 25 (1), 1-10.
- [18] Chinwanno, W. (2018). Ethics of the Teacher' Profession. Unpublished. Thailand Research Fund. 2018
- [19] Shirley M. H. (1997). Professional Learning Community. Louis & Marks.
- [20] Sjoer, E., & Meirink, J. (2016). Understanding the complexity of teacher interaction in a teacher professional learning community. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(1), 110-125.
- [21] Schaap, H., Louws, M., Meirink, J., Oolbakkink-Marchand, H., Van Der Want, A., Zuiker, I., ... & Meijer, P. (2019). Tensions experienced by teachers when participating in a professional learning community. *Professional development in education*, 45(5), 814-831.
- [22] Phanich, W. (2012). Ways to create learning for students in the 21st century. Bangkok: Tathata Pub.
- [23] Basic Education Commission. (2015). Teacher Development and Basic Education Personnel.
- [24] Vanblaere, B., & Devos, G. (2016). Relating school leadership to perceived professional learning community characteristics: A multilevel analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 57, 26-38.
- [25] Chichibu, T., Uchizaki, T., & Ono, Y. (2019). Promoting Teacher Collaborative Learning in Lesson Study: Exploring and Interpreting Leadership to Create Professional Learning Community. In *Instructional Leadership and Leadership for Learning in Schools* (pp. 299-316). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.