



Multicultural Music Teacher Education in the Context of Buriram Rajabhat University's Educational Production

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate the education process and for music teachers and to analyze the educators' current music teacher education paradigm.

The results of the research show that Buriram Rajabhat University is one of the main music teacher education institutes in the lower part of northeast Thailand. Most music teacher currently teaching in the mentioned region graduated from this institute. According to the university's philosophy the educational process for music teachers reflects the music educators' ideal of multicultural music education.

Recommendations from this study include collaboration between local educational units and the university music education department in order to establish local music learning centers. Knowledge Management Information technology should be employed in the music teacher education process. Music educators' capability will be enhanced in all aspects, including teaching, supervising, and the use of educational media. Music educators' worldview reflects music as a principle vital to many elements of life. People in the lower part of northeast Thailand should have a considerable role in music activities, including conserving, applying, creating, and criticizing music.

Keywords : Education for music teachers, Multicultural music education

Introduction

Education for music teachers in Thailand has undergone a lot of changes from the past. There used to be a department under the Ministry of Education dealing directly with teachers' training. There were also teachers' training programs provided by many universities. The most noticeable change since then is that many

colleges and universities, especially Rajabhat universities, have adopted the policy supporting teacher education to meet professional quality and standard. This policy results from the education reformation according to the National Education Act in B.E. 2542, the modified issue in B.E. 2545 and the National Education Strategy from B.E. 2545 to 2549 and the modified version from

B.E. 2552 to B.E. 2559, defined by the Board of Education. The policy has become the main mission of the institution under the supervision of the Higher Education Commission.

The teachers' training policy at Rajabhat universities has led music educators to focus on the curriculum development for music teachers, especially the 5-year program according to the New-generation Teacher program of the Ministry of Education.

Music education in Thailand in the school system has been consistently developed and modified according to the processes, systems and mechanisms regulated by the Ministry of Education. The development is most noticeable in the past 30 years. Many colleges and universities offer a bachelor's degree in music education for future music teachers with the curriculum created by in-house scholars and music educators. The graduates are now working at different educational institutions.

The reflection of music education in the past and the result of the education reformation have stimulated a revamp of music education in Thailand. According to the National Education Act in B.E. 2542, the development of music teachers and researchers as well as music educators the most important mission since they play an important role in the development of music education. The education reformation allows the universities to have more freedom in organizing their curricula. Thus, the mission can be accomplished at the university level while considering national policy and standard in education.

Buriram Rajabhat University, previously a Teachers' College, is ranked by the Teacher Training Department as one of the most outstanding institutions that generate music teachers in the northeastern region of Thailand with long

experiences in teachers' development. After becoming a university and undergoing changes within the organization, now the music teaching program is under the Faculty of Education, which has improved the policy and philosophy of music teaching.

Buriram Rajabhat University presents an important case study of the local undergraduate institutions. Its philosophy has been to provide education for community development from the beginning.

Aims

1. Examine how music teachers are educated at Buriram Rajabhat University
2. Analyze the philosophy of music educators at Buriram Rajabhat University

Research Methodology

The study of education for music teachers at Buriram Rajabhat University is a qualitative research presenting a case study. The data were collected by thorough interview, group discussion, document analysis and observation. The data were then analyzed in order to study the background and the overall situation of teacher education and the roles and efficiency of music educators involved in the music teachers' development. The results were interpreted in order to explain different concepts such as the efficiency of music teachers, the adoption of the policy of music teachers for local development and the trend of music education for local teachers.

Research Findings

It was found that the reason why education for music teachers is important at Buriram Rajabhat University and other Rajabhat universities was the establishment of the systematic teachers' training

since B.E. 2435 that has been consistently improved to suit Thailand's economy, culture and society. The development of teachers' training is summarized below.

Development of teachers' training in Thailand from B.E. 2435 to 2497

B.E. 2435

King Rama V founded the Teachers' Training School for the first time. It is the same year in which the Department of Education was promoted to be the Ministry of Education. The teachers' training school was created to fulfill the need for specialized teachers in the new school system that followed the western style. The name of the school was "Teachers' Training School". It was founded on October 12, 2435. There were three students at the beginning and the number was increasing consistently. Some graduates continued their studies in England. Therefore, at the beginning, Thailand's teachers' training was similar to the British system.

B.E. 2445

The school was relocated and renamed. The new name was "Dhepsirin Teachers' Training School". The school was divided into two departments: Teachers' training school and Primary school. The compulsory courses for teachers were 1) Principles of teaching in primary level (Niti Laksoot Prayoke 1) 2) Accounting and Classification and 3) Practicum.

B.E. 2448

The teachers' training curriculum was modified. The courses were more systematically divided into 13 groups: 1) Teachers' ethics 2) Teaching science 3) Thai characters 4) Thai 5) English 6) Calculation 7) Geography and derivations 8) Science 9) Arts 10) Music

11) Physical education 12) Social management and 13) Knowledge in governmental services. In Teaching science, the students had to learn Principles of Education, Principles of Schooling, School Management, Practicum, Logics and Psychology.

B.E. 2449

The department of education combined Dhepsirin Teachers' Training School with the Teachers' Training School of the West, which was a boarding school for students from suburban areas and laymen.

B.E. 2456

The Teachers' Training School was combined with the School of Civil Service (Chulalongkorn University) under the Department of Education. The school was then moved to Wang Mai in Pathumwan. It was the first time that female students were admitted to the teachers' training program.

Between B.E. 2460 to 2496, the status of teachers' training institutions became more and more recognized. There was transfer of responsibility to many sections such as Chulalongkorn University, the Department of Education, the Department of Educational Technique and the Department of Elementary Education. This shows that the suitable management was yet to be in place at that time. At the same time, the Primary School Teachers' Training School of Pra Nakorn, which was one of the most important teachers' schools, changed its name to "Pra Nakorn Teachers' Training School" and later to "Pra Nakorn Teachers' College". It offered a three-year program for primary school teachers. The first two years followed the curriculum of Mattayom 7 and 8 (now equivalent to high school diploma).

B.E. 2492

Thailand's government founded a teachers' training school of higher education at Prasarnmit Road, which was later promoted to be the Teachers' College offering a bachelor's degree in Education.

In the first 60 years of teachers' training, teachers' colleges and schools were under different governmental sections until B.E. 2497 which was the year the Department of Teachers' Education was established by the Ministry of Education to respond to the need of a unified unit responsible for teachers' training. Since then, the curriculum of teachers' education was revamped. The certificate of education took two years to complete and many teachers' training schools were founded in both urban and suburban areas. Some schools offered a bachelor's degree and was upgraded to Teachers' College. In B.E. 2513, all teachers' training schools in Thailand were promoted to be Teachers' College.

Development of Rajabhat Universities

Rajabhat universities are a group of public institutions of higher education which was developed from Teachers' College under the Ministry of Education. They were promoted from Teachers' Training Schools to Teachers' College then to Rajabhat Institute and finally Rajabhat universities respectively. At present, there are 40 Rajabhat universities in Thailand altogether. Rajabhat Institutes became universities according to the Rajabhat University Act in B.E. 2547. The development from Teachers' College to Rajabhat University took almost 30 years from B.E. 2518 to 2546.

Before B.E. 2535, there were 36 teachers' colleges altogether in different regions of Thailand. The increase of teachers' colleges was due to the rise of population which called for more

teachers to provide the young generation with basic education.

From B.E. 2515 to 2535, the National Economic and Social Development Strategy volume 3 has led to changes in the role of the Teachers' Colleges. They not only provided degrees for teachers, but also offered degrees in other areas. Therefore, there were many degrees offered in the teachers' colleges, which later became Rajabhat institutes. The Rajabhat Act B.E. 2538 aimed at producing graduates of higher education of multi-disciplines. The main idea is to combine local wisdom with international wisdom in order to strengthen the community. In B.E. 2544, there were 41 Rajabhat institutes.

All Rajabhat institutes became juristic organizations having autonomy in management and planning aiming at the stability in education. For this reason, all Rajabhat Institutes became universities. The Rajabhat University Act was announced in the government gazette on June 14 B.E. 2547.

Since all Rajabhat Institutes became universities at the same time, they are judged by the society to be inferior to other existing universities due to the limited amount of faculty and insufficient facilities. However, they provide equal opportunity for students in the remote areas while public universities have entrance exam and private universities have high tuition fee. Therefore, Rajabhat universities play an important role in the community and are still strong in training and developing teachers.

Education for Music Teachers at Buriram Rajabhat University (BRU)

Buriram Rajabhat University (BRU) was Buriram Teachers' College. It was founded in B.E. 2514. The purpose was to provide teachers'

education in the lower area and some upper areas of Northeastern Thailand. Its development is similar to other Rajabhat universities'. At present, it offers certificates and diplomas in both undergraduate and graduate studies. Even though its status has changed to university, its focus is still providing teachers' training, especially music teachers. A major in Music Studies is offered under the Faculty of Education.

Education for music teachers began in B.E. 2521. Buriram Rajabhat University offered a certificate in Music studies and a Bachelor's degree in Education (B.Ed.) majoring Music studies. Later, a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Music studies is offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science. In B.E. 2547, the institute became university. As a consequence, the scholars in music studies moved from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science to the Faculty of Education. The department of music studies was then formed and has offered a five-year program of B.Ed. in Music Studies. It was recognized as one of the five institutions to develop the new generation teachers in the field of music studies in B.E. 2552.

Philosophy in Music Education for Music Teachers at BRU

The philosophy of the music educators has been adjusted to suit the mission and role of music studies in the Faculty of Education according to the community development philosophy of the university. From data analysis, we found that the most important characteristic that music teachers in Buriram and the surrounding areas

must have is the practical ability. The secondary characteristic is the theoretical ability. For the practical ability, the music teachers must know three types of music: folk music, popular music and art music so that they can combine the students' knowledge gained by socialization with the music knowledge and skills learned at school. This combination reflects the importance of multicultural music education and of the music educators at BRU. Another area that is equally important is pedagogy. The students in music education at BRU must take pedagogical courses similar to the students in other areas of education. This reflects the attempt to meet the standard of teaching profession while the specialized music courses and music education are based on the knowledge of various music types.

The Future Image of Music Education at BRU

The music educators at BRU propose that the trend of education in the next ten years will be the learning society. The community will be able to participate in managing the local learning center. There will be technological advance and use of information technology to collect music knowledge. The music educators will have more potential in teaching, supervision and material development. Since music plays an important role in the society, people in the community will be able to join in the creation and critique of the music created by local musicians. The proposed future image of the development of music education in the lower northeastern area of Thailand is summarized in the figure below.

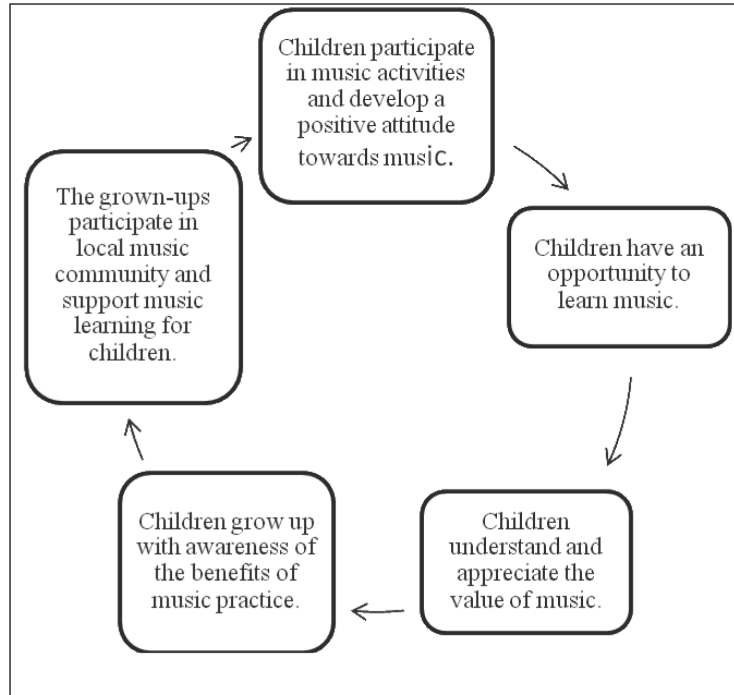


Figure 1 Processes of development in music education in Buriram and the lower northeastern areas

The music educators at BRU look at the future of music education as consistent with the economic and social change. Their major role is to educate music teachers and the education is pairing with the local music education. The children will be the future educators who are qualified.

The department of music studies of the Faculty of Education at Buriram Rajabhat University and that in other Rajabhat universities have educated music teachers for more than four decades under restricted budget and medium quality of students. Still, the music teachers from these institutions have influenced music education in local schools. In the future, BRU will provide an opportunity to those who have restricted budget and opportunity to study in higher education as well as increase the quality of the graduates.

Reflections and Visions

From the research findings, we propose some reflections and visions below in order to increase the quality and potential of education

for music teachers and the local music education at BRU.

1) The music educators at BRU should provide a clear mission statement, philosophy, objectives and operation plans under the concept of Multicultural music education that is consistent of the university’s philosophy to be the place for community development and learning opportunity.

2) There should be research and analytical activities or programs that support the development and assessment of the undergraduate degree by inviting guests from other organizations or communities to participate.

3) They should invite guests from overseas who are willing to give consult and share their knowledge on western music culture.

4) There should be music associations for high school students who would like to become music teachers. They should be able to participate without any costs. This results from the research finding as shown in figure 1.

5) There should be a music library, both physically and digitally, to store books, records, digital lessons and music sheets. It should be a part of the central library in order to save budget.

6) There should be an information center of the lower region of Northeastern Thailand. Community, network and external organizations should be allowed to participate in developing music education innovation and knowledge management of music research and creation.

7) BRU should have a concrete operation plan for the new generation of music researchers and educators. The future students should understand the philosophy, be eager to learn and be organized.

8) BRU should offer a graduate degree in music studies in order to develop researchers for future development in music education and music studies.

Suggestions for Future Research

1) Music educators and independent researchers from private sections should cooperate to improve research in music studies in order to expand knowledge in such areas as teaching under the concept of multicultural music education, anthropological and sociological music studies, history and development of music education in the northeastern region of Thailand, music school

management that is suitable for students in Northeastern Thailand and how to improve music education in the elementary level in the lower area of Northeastern Thailand.

2) There should be another case study on current situations and trends in management of education for music teachers in other colleges and universities in Thailand, Southeast Asia and Far East. We believe that a case study is the most detailed research method that provides a holistic picture better than other approaches.

3) There should be a study that provides strategies for education management in order to help with music teaching and improve the music community in Buriram Rajabhat University. In order to allow the faculty and scholars to provide education of better quality to the students, education planning and cooperation between sectors within the university should be in place. As well, the university should have strategies for effective management that provides mental and financial support for the faculty to help advancement in the teaching career.

4) There should be community research using both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to raise awareness and promote the value and importance of music culture in the lower area of Northeastern Thailand.

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