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Constructing a Suitable Model of Distance Training for Community Leader in the Upper Northeastern Region

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***Abstract*—**The objective of this research intends to create a suitable model of distance training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region of Thailand. The implementation of the research process is divided into four steps: The first step is to analyze relevant documents. The second step deals with an interview in depth with experts. The third step is concerned with constructing a model. And the fourth step takes aim at model validation by expert assessments. The findings reveal the two important components for constructing an appropriate model of distance training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region. The first component consists of the context of technology management, e.g., principle, policy and goals. The second component can be viewed in two ways. Firstly, there are elements comprising input, process, output and feedback. Secondly, the sub-components include steps and process in training. The result of expert assessments informs that the researcher's constructed model is consistent and suitable and overall the most appropriate.

***Keywords*—**Constructing, Distance Training, Management, Technology.

I. Introduction

THE 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001) and the 9th Plan (2002-2006) gave the importance of the participation of all sectors in the society and strived towards "human-centered development" in which the balanced development, an integrated whole individual, social, economic, and environmental were called for in order to achieve sustainable development and well being of Thai population [8]. It is imperative for organizations to search and develop knowledge, competency and capacity of their people and to maintain their physical and psychological strength in order for them to live happily in the society [11]. One way towards "human" development is to rely on training a process which consumes much less time than general classroom instructions. Training brings forth a systematic change and development of skills and attitude through the learning experience to create efficiency in work situations [2]. Although, training is considered a necessity for development of skills, knowledge and competency of individuals involved, it faces with many problems and obstacles. In managing training, a distance to training locations and training course design irrelevant to the needs of participants become more problematic. Next in the line are insufficient numbers of facilitators and staff, and inadequate funding for training [10]. From these problems and obstacles associated with training, there occurs a developmental idea in a form of "distance training." Long-distance communication appears as two-way communication which brings many parties to face-to-face encounters with natural sights and sounds. Thus, it facilitates all parties involved doing various kinds of their group activities [3]. However, essential modern instruments and installations of video conference for distance training high technology deployment consume high costs and high budgetary allocations, the researcher as a technology management expert would like to find appropriate ways and means to enable a suitable model for distance training possible and workable for community leaders in the upper northeastern region. This proposition will be pursued with the hope that it will solve the problems and consequently lead to the sustainable development of local communities in a not–far–distant future.

Fig. 1 Community leader training

II. Methodology

This research has four steps in the process of its implementation. The first step is to analyze relevant documents as to their contents and come to the summary of their concepts and theories of the distance learning for community leaders. The second step deals with an interview in depth with experts

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whose qualifications are based on the following two criteria: 1) their practical knowledge and experience in the internet network and distance training, 2) an academic standing not below that of assistant professorship. The list of this expertise has been approved by the four members of the advisory committee. The research tools rely on an interview with structural forms and the researcher's data collection in field trip, i.e., directly conducting the interview with the experts. The data analysis points to a content analysis, summary and frequency consistent with the queries in the interviews.

Fig. 2 Expert interview in depth with Associate Professor Dr. Suthipong Hoksuwan, Mahasarakham University

Fig. 3 Expert interview in depth with Associate Professor Ladda Sukpridee, Burapha University

The third step is concerned with a construction of a model, derived as a consequence of the first and second steps, with its suitability for community leaders in the upper northeastern region. This proposed model has been examined by the advisory committee with suggestions for its further improvement.

The fourth step takes aim at the model validation by the nine experts recognized by the advisory committee. The research tools at this stage consist of the evaluation format for the consistency and appropriateness of the model, and the data analysis involving the mean and standard deviation.

III. Conclusion

In constructing a suitable model of distance training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region, the conclusion of the research can be summarized as follows:

The first step, the analysis of the relevant document has been directed to the contents, principles of technology management, e.g., the purpose of this endeavor, strategic management, inputs, process, output and feedback. The principle of training is incumbent upon determining the following aspects : notification of ways of training, analysis of target groups, analysis of content, standardization of criteria, purpose of training, principle of learning and motivation, selection of training methods, proper implementation of training, measurement of the effectiveness of training, and monitoring and evaluating of training. There is one more important area worth taking into consideration the principle of adult learning; adults want to decide for themselves, full of confidence about their own experiences and also full of expectations of any kind of learning to bear immediate fruit with subsequent practical exchanges. This psychological demand from community leaders who are mostly advanced aging adults have to be kept in mind. The degree to which the distance learning system can achieve its successful ends depends heavily on the implementing plan, various activities, availability of proper tools and equipment, appropriate contents, suitable environmental setting and befitting evaluation system.

The second step, the interviews in depth deal with the policy side in forms of long-life learning and expansion of educational opportunity to local communities. About the goals, what taken into consideration are appreciative use of available resources, reduction of costs and increase in productivity. As for the role of facilitators, the concern has been finding ways and methods of proper dissemination for distance training with two-way, long-distance communication directed towards adult learning. Reversely for the participants, they should be well-prepared to participate in training activities. Simultaneously, assistant facilitators will aid in the collaboration between facilitators and participants in order for the training to come out smoothly. The role of the technician is to offer necessary technical assistance and good mechanical control. The deployment of high-tech instruments, especially computer components and multi-media systems must aim at the optimal benefits resulting from effective working conditions.

The selection of software can be applied to the highest benefit by relying on a simple, not complex, program which can bring clear pictures and bright sounds. The program popular both domestically and internationally can reduce the cost and accumulate monetary saving. In considering the training course, the emphasis is on the needs of those participating, corresponding to their way of life in communities and localities including the ability to apply gained practical knowledge in real life situations. The built environment of training is good locations with the conducive atmosphere.

On the budget side, the idea prevails in reduction of costs and an increase in saving as well as appreciative use of available resources. The process of training runs along the known and proven courses and contents, scheduled activities, measurement and evaluation. The productivity from training is measured in the form of participants' knowledge acquired and satisfaction. For the feedback, the analysis of the problems and obstacles on the training in every step of the way will be used for further improvement in every aspect of training.

The third step, the construction of a suitable model proceeded from the results of implementing the first and second steps can be utilized in the training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region. This proposed model has been examined by the panel of experts on the advisory committee along with its subsequent improvement as presented in the Fig. 4.

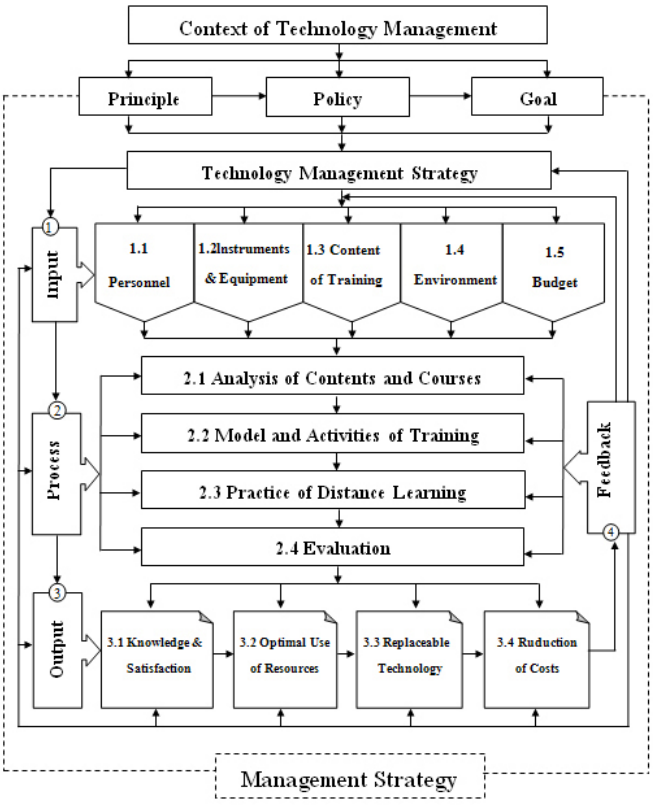

Fig. 4 A Suitable Model of Distance Training for Community Leaders

The fourth step, the result of evaluation of the suitable model of distance training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region have been shown in the Table I.

TABLE I
THE RESULT OF EVALUATION

No.	Consistent and Suitable	$\overline{X}$	S.D	Ranking
1.	Core-components and Sub-components of a Model.	4.78	0.44	1
2.	Context of Technology Management, e.g., Principle, Policy and Goal.	4.78	0.44	1
3.	Technology Management Strategy.	4.67	0.50	2
4.	Input Unit , e.g., Personnel, Instruments, Environment and Budget.	4.56	0.73	3
5.	Process Unit , e.g., Contents and Activities.	4.67	0.50	2
6.	Output Unit , e.g., Knowledge and Satisfaction.	4.56	0.73	3
7.	Feedback , e.g., Detecting , Weaknesses and Errors.	4.78	0.44	1
	Total	4.67	0.50	-

From Table I, The result of expert assessments informs that the researcher's constructed model is consistent and suitable and overall the most appropriate.

They also come to the other suggestions: 1) the core-components and sub-components of a model must be consistent and appropriate for distance training for community leaders who are senior adults with advanced age and prefer more different kinds of learning than the youth and 2) the application of this suitable model of distance learning must be carried out judiciously in every step of the way.

IV. DISCUSSION

Discussion of the findings in this research can be broken down into four areas.

1. The result of documentary analysis comprises the content on principle of technology management, principle of training, learning principle of adulthood and principle of distance training. The path towards a successful construction of a suitable model of distance training needs to bring in the principle and theory of technology management. Kamron Srinoy, 2006 [5] suggests the appreciative use of technology which is consistent with Bodin Rusamites' recommendation, 2007 [1] in that technology management must bring cost saving done by the improvement of resources and utilization of available resources to make them utmost beneficial. Apart from that, the strategic management must also come into play. Jintana Boonbongkarn and Nuttapan Kejornnan, 2001[4] mention that the core-components of the strategic management process comprise the environmental analysis, organizational direction, strategic decision, implementation of strategy and monitoring and strategic evaluation. Oranuch Sukavesh, 2003 [9] emphasizes the benefit of training which gives an opportunity for people's learning under the practical guide of knowledgeable lecturers or facilitators with particular experience in subject matters. As for adult learning, Korchakorn Sankachart, 1984 [6] explains the principle of adult learning in the following fashion: 1) adults can learn well when they want to, 2) adults learn by doing, and 3) adults learn well in a friendly atmosphere. Furthermore, Monica C. Turner, 2009 [7]

believes that long-distance communication helps people at all levels to communicate one another from separate, far-away places ; thus, it reduces great costs of travel and room rates. This designed technology is becoming for distance training, collective work and distance exchanges among the experts with reduced costs and time saving.

2. From the analysis of the interviews in depth, there reveals the agreement on the importance of lifelong learning policy and the widening of educational opportunity for local communities. The panel of experts also proposes to set up the criteria for selecting appropriate technology both hardware and software. In the implementing process, the experts recommend for the training course setting, analysis of content, and arrangement of activities mostly corresponding to the desire of the participants.

3. In constructing this suitable model of distance training for community leaders, the researcher has combined the two components into one: 1) the context of technology management relating to principle, policy, and goals, 2) the replica of model's major and minor components; the major ones consisting of inputs, process, productivity and feedback, the minor ones consisting of the processing steps in the implementation of the system to push the major components to full efficiency.

4. The result of the evaluation of the suitable model of training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region, completed by the panel of experts reveal in the overall picture that it gains the most appropriate mark because the researcher takes every proper step rightly and suitably under the monitoring and advice of the advisory committee. Moreover, the panel of experts gives further suggestions that the major and minor components must be consistent with and suitable for the system of distance training for adult participants who are familiar with learning process different from the younger age. The principle and theory of learning for adult to bring forth this research model. It is imperative that the distance training for community leaders in the upper northeastern region and elsewhere as assigned to any organizations must be followed closely and properly in all the established steps in order to bear fruitful results.

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