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A Study on the Teacher Training Systems in Cambodia

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The reason that I focused on the teacher training systems in Cambodia is the unusual background of its history. Cambodia has been one of the least developed countries since 1971. In the 1970s, a civil war by the Pol Pot administration occurred in Cambodia and brought suffering to a significant portion of the population. In particular, intellectuals such as teachers and professors were killed.

The civil war did especially serious damage to Cambodian education, which faces quite a lot of challenges such as a lack of schools, classrooms, and teaching materials. Nowadays, problems concerning physical resources are gradually improving due to the efforts of the ministry of education and international cooperation. However, problems with the quality of teaching are in a more serious condition than problems concerning capital assets in recent years.

There is a lack of teachers, a lack of quality teachers, and a lack of teaching methodologies and environments for teachers to share knowledge or ideas with other teachers or with government officials. These conditions are also not suitable for students because they depend on the teachers. Therefore, the essential problem which should be solved first is to improve the quality of teachers and teacher training systems.

In this research, questionnaires and discussion of education were set up in Kratie province, one of the poorest provinces in Cambodia, to discover problems in the present teacher training systems and challenges teachers have.

According to the questionnaire, 81 percent of teachers in each educational institute surveyed are not satisfied with their final qualifications. However, there are no support systems for them to improve their qualifications in the present teacher training systems.

In general, many teachers have additional jobs because their salaries are insufficient to cover the cost of living. Because of this problem, teachers are very poor and very busy, so it is difficult to study on their own or to go to school to improve their teaching knowledge and abilities.

The novelties of this research approach include the application of the SECI spiral model for knowledge creation proposed by Nonaka & Takeuchi to the research flow; and the use of the simplified Soft System Methodology for the discussion of education, which teachers and government officials attended, to clarify the challenges in the present teacher training systems and identify valid solutions which could be agreed upon by all stakeholders.

In conclusion, some solutions such as building a learning center equipped with ICT resources for teachers were created and agreed on by all participants. Finally, the Kratie governor approved the proposal and initiated implementation projects.

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