

COMPLETION REPORT

Lifelong Learning Policy for Elderly People: A Comparative Experience between Japan and Thailand

Dr. Nopraenu Sajjarax Dhirathiti

Assistant Professor

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities,

Mahidol University, Thailand

Lifelong Learning Policy for the Elderly People: A Comparative Experience between Japan and Thailand

This study examined and compared the legal inputs, structural settings and the implementation process of lifelong learning policy in Thailand and Japan. This research is conducted during April 2013 – March 2014, comparing the process of policy implementation of lifelong learning for the elderly in two capital cities, Bangkok and Tokyo, by using a qualitative research technique. The data collection included documentary and library research, interviews and focus groups, comprised of 30 key informants in total. In this research, interviewers kept contemporaneous notes and interviews were recorded. All of the interviewees were kept anonymous. Thematic and descriptive content analysis were used to identify and group main findings. The findings demonstrated that while both countries have legal frameworks providing a policy platform to promote lifelong learning among the elderly as well as the policies which can be described as a bottom-up implementation, the main differences can be found in many respects. Firstly, the promotion of lifelong learning for the elderly in Thailand mirrored a complex administrative structure of several hosts at the ministerial level, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and Ministry of Interior and many legal frameworks. Contrarily, Japan's lifelong learning policy has been straightforwardly promoted based on the Social Education Act under a single ministry, that is, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Secondly, while Thailand has based its policy implementation on the government agents at the regional and local level in delivering the lifelong learning policy to the elderly, Japan has developed a community-based multi-layered platform to promote the policy with active involvement from various local players. Finally, lifelong learning policy for the elderly in Japan is pursued out of the interests of the elderly and the community in which they live. Japan is of the view that the elderly should be encouraged or able to identify their own needs, problems and preferences to education. The idea is clearly agreed and translated into practices at all levels from the national down to the municipalities as well as the community. Coupled with the active participation of the elderly, another unique characteristic is the active role of the community learning centres and other resource learning facilities in providing venues and platform for learning activities. Lifelong learning policy for the elderly in Thailand, on the other hand, reflects the context in which the government agents at the local level are pursuing their own initiatives in promoting lifelong learning among the elderly. While observing the same policy guidelines and regulations, each provincial, district and sub-district offices of non-formal and informal education (ONIEs) is given enough liberty to design and exercise its own strategies to deliver the lifelong learning policy to the elderly.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.) N/A
Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.) N/A
Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.) N/A
Journal The results of this research will be submitted to a journal in the SCOPUS database. The final published result will be notified once the manuscript is approved and accepted.