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# The Effectiveness of Educational Policy Implementation in Rural Primary Schools in Guangxi China and Thailand

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### Abstract

Rural primary education plays a key role in economic development, and it is also important for sustaining growth in many countries. This article, therefore, sets forth a descriptive method for investigating the approaches to implement educational policies in rural primary schools in Guangxi, China and Thailand. Principals of rural primary schools are purposely selected to express their policy implementation perceptions on the open-ended questionnaires. Their expressions are identified, analyzed, and synthesized to summarize the meaning and essence of information. To ensure data accuracy, the final result is confirmed by respondents, and reviewed by educational experts. The findings indicated that rural primary schools in Guangxi, China and Thailand adopted the corresponding approaches to implement educational policies for achieving goals as in policy formulation process, action plan process, stakeholders' participation and collaboration, teachers and staff encouragement, monitor and control process, assessment and improvement process, and transparency. Yet schools placed little emphasis on staff training with new and necessary skills. Nevertheless, policy implementation of rural schools in Guangxi, China may lean toward regulations and bureaucracy or chains of command, and the encouragement system may focus primarily on the reward and punishment. Whereas rural schools in Thailand promoted the involvement of teachers and other staff, and encouragement was implemented with a staff engagement approach. The author recommends that school executives should encourage teachers and staff to learn new and necessary skills and utilize the assessment results to implement new policies earnestly.

### Introduction

According to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of United Nations, the SDG 4 (Quality of Education) aims to ensure inclusive and equitable

quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all including poor children, children living in rural areas, and so forth. However, more than half of all children and adolescents worldwide fail to

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meet the minimum proficiency standards in reading and mathematics (United Nations, 2022).

Rural education is known as a key role in economic development, and it is also important for sustaining growth in countries with a large rural population such as China and Thailand (Yue et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2019). The potential of rural young people represented in innovative resource of social, economic, and cultural development, is a vital factor of the material and intellectual renovation of the countryside, and education plays a deciding role to the realization of the innovative potential of young people in school today (Gur'ianova, 2012). Nevertheless, adverse environmental effect by poverty can reduce the potential of children for academic success at a young age (Cadoret et al., 2018). Children in disadvantaged communities register lower school outcomes and grow up without acquiring the skills needed on the labor market, and because of poor early childhood development outcomes, many rural students may be unprepared for skilled labor market (Zamfi, 2017; Bai et al., 2019). Thus, public investment in education in rural areas is expected to play an essential and crucial role in preparing skilled labors for industrialization, since public educational investment as the Free Compulsory Education policy reduces the educational cost of rural schooling and benefits the economy due to its positive long-term impact on human capital (Zhang et al., 2019; Bai et al., 2019).

Guangxi had a total of 5,071,781 primary school students who were studying in regular primary schools as of 2020 classified into three groups: 27.28% for city, 37.36% for township, and 35.36% for rural (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2021). In 2021, Thailand had 3,021,671 primary school students who were studying in public schools under Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) Ministry of Education, and most schools were located in rural areas (Office of Basic Education Policy and Plan, 2022). In China and Thailand, primary school education is compulsory for six years. Children start schools at age six or seven in some areas.

China and Thailand have implemented educational policies which are designed to reduce child labor and increase schooling by lowering the cost of schooling via educational subsidies such as The Free Compulsory Education and the rural compulsory education for students' Nutrition Improvement Program in China, and the 15 years of free education for all children and the school mid-day meal scheme in Thailand (Office of

Policy and Strategy, 2009). The appropriate policies can help turn government educational investment into a more efficient engine for sustainable economic development (Zhang, Niu, Wan, & Wang, 2019). However, public spending alone is insufficient for achieving the goal of improving educational outcomes for the poor (Gaddah, Munro, & Quartey, 2015). The educational policies must be implemented effectively and efficiently, starting in rural primary schools, for achieving goals of education leading to be a worthwhile human capital investment, and having an effect to economic growth and well-being of people.

Stakeholders such as teachers and students need to share a common vision with regards to global competitiveness (Im & Kim, 2015). The process of collaboratively setting a vision and common goals, and identifying community leaders have increased broad participation (Krantzberg, 2018). Strategic Information Systems Planning (SISP) could not be implemented without active collaboration and participation from all stakeholders (Angsor & Yusof, 2019). Thus, schools should use strategies with building long-term capacity and support for programs to engage participation and collaboration of staff, students, parents, and local community, because parental participation and support are the important factors for success (Day, Sahota, & Christian, 2019). Moreover, poor community participation, transparency, and accountability are the major policy implementation challenges, it is important to ensure that schools increase their efforts to enhance the community participation in decision-making and other activities (Bishoge, Zhang, & Mushi, 2019).

Teams must translate the accurate data for decision-making which is essential to sustain implementation into plan and evaluation, since the promoting factors of the implementation are related to policy plans (Mundschenk & Fuchs, 2016; Larsen, Samdal, & Tjomsland, 2013). The action plan includes basic operation steps, policy adjustment, and resource allocation, thus the government and other school stakeholders should provide the adequate facilities required by the school for the implementation of policy (Horner et al., 2019; Okoli & Okorie, 2015). Additionally, schools should have effective policy implementation committees that can make decisions, establish teams and handle a technical support team to develop clear guidelines and work process, since the implementing quality process is a central factor of the effective implementation (Angsor & Yusof, 2019;

O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012).

The effective implementation of policies seems to depend on the active intervention in the process of management, and the policy support of management has a positive impact on the work culture perception of staff, thus the management should have a formal role in the implementation of relevant policies (Straub, Vinkenburg, Kleef, & Hofmans, 2018). School leaders should provide the impulsion for the process to motivate the team realizing the objectives of the implementation process, to create a possible environment for teamwork, and to sustain the effective utilization of staff and technical resources in order to achieve the goals of the implementation process (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012). In addition, support from the organization and top management is essential to achieve effective policy implementation as management can contribute to effective implementation through encouraging discourses, appropriate recognition and rewards, role building and even pressure. (Beeck, Wynen, & Hondeghem, 2018; Angsor & Yusof, 2019; Trullen, Stirpe, Bonache, & Valverde, 2016; Nahyan & All, 2017). Apart from that, effective leadership is considered to be advocates of action for schools to implement such changes, and determine the role of staff for delivering programs, thus leadership is an important and significant factor for the effective implementation of programs (Day et al., 2019; Laureania & Antony, 2018; O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012). Moreover, leaders should demonstrate their commitment on achieving the goal of policy implementation (Davies, 2008; O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012).

The background, experiences, and competencies of teachers and other staff influence policy enactment (Felix, 2021). Teachers' lack of work enthusiasm, social moral decay and the negative impact of the media are the main challenges affecting the implementation, thus teachers' passion, competency, and building of appropriate environment could reduce the challenges of effective implementation (Njoku & Njoku, 2015). All school staff should be trained regularly, especially before developing and implementing a new or changing policy (Corkett & Hastings, 2020). The lack of training and support is a challenging factor to the implementation (Day et al., 2019). In addition, school staff recommended the support for successful implementation of future programs as training in strategies of a collaborative partnership, extended planning time, sufficient capacity, external support for delivery, good resources, and

facilities, because unsustainable funding and external support could hinder the implementation and its sustainability (Brendle, Lock, & Piazza, 2017; Day et al., 2019). Teachers with high levels of adaptation and skills are an important asset to the schools, they are the implementing team leaders and key drivers to implement the education policy in schools, thus capacity at school-level is a critical issue for effective implementation, and school capacity can be built up with training (Yaacob et al., 2020; Day et al., 2019).

Arden et al. (2017) suggested some actions for advancing effective implementation of tiered systems of intervention in schools such as assessing readiness and capacity, providing content and coaching as part of professional development, and using evaluation data. Leadership teams should continuously analyze and use school data to address specific problems, and identify solutions acceptable to teachers that are practical, realistic, and are possible to implement in schools (Mundschenk & Fuchs, 2016).

### Objectives

1. To determine the implementation of educational policies in rural primary schools in Guangxi, China.
2. To determine the implementation of educational policies in rural primary schools in Thailand.

### Conceptual framework

The two effective implementation concepts were employed in this study as follows: 1) The effective implementation framework of George W. Bush Institute by Wicks, Chiang, and Taylor-Raymond (2019) who proposed the framework to manage complex changes to practice and policy as follows: (1) Initiate change: since every change starts somewhere, leaders should establish vision and foundation such as establishing rationale for change and establishing guiding coalition of champions. (2) Engage stakeholders: since stakeholders are vital impact factor on successful change. Leaders should understand stakeholders' challenges, expectations, and have effective communication. (3) Build capacity: this is moving from vision to reality. Leaders should create effective implementation teams, invest in necessary resources, and run efficient team meetings. (4) Set goals and plans: leaders should establish goals and create an appropriate implementation plan. (5) Execute, Reflect, and Improve: the continuous improvement is the most important priority of organizations, leaders must stay on

track, monitor, examine data, and use results to improve continuously. 2) Indicators for effective policy development and implementation by Stonemeier, Trader, Kaloi, and Williams (2016) who proposed the five indicators of effective policy development and implementation as follows: (1) Practice and policy alignment: evidence-based practices are well aligned with all policies. (2) Stakeholder engagement: schools and all stakeholders should work together to create shared ownership and support for policy improvements. (3) Active implementation: schools should focus on creative problem solving in the short term and create strategies to achieve long-term solutions. (4) Ongoing evaluation and support: schools should adopt the PDSA to evaluate effectiveness of new practices, identify needed supports and gather data to make meaningful changes, alleviate barriers, embed solutions and improvement. (5) Transparency: all implementation processes should have transparency.

### Research methodology

Based on a descriptive approach, this study uses field research to analyze the effective implementation of educational policy in rural primary school in Guangxi China and Thailand. This paper determines the study units as rural primary school. Applied from National Center for Education Statistics: Rural Education in America, 2011, this paper categorizes primary schools in Thailand into three groups; city, municipal area, and rural. Primary schools in China are also divided into categories city, township, and rural. Thus, rural primary schools have been defined as public and regular primary schools located in rural China or Thailand. The aim was to research the work and administrative experiences of principals by using an analytical approach to identify, analyze, and synthesize the principals' experiences leading to clusters of meaning and the essence of the analysis.

#### 1. The participants

This research sheds light on the experiences of principals of rural primary schools. It focuses on how these principals transformed the government educational policies and successfully implemented in their primary schools. The five primary schools in rural Guangxi, China and five primary schools in rural Thailand were purposely selected. Principals of those rural primary schools were asked to express their opinions by writing on structural questionnaire documents, and e-mail was used to communicate for collecting data such as

sending and receiving questionnaire documents. In order to protect the respondents' privacy, their names were pseudonymous and their biodata remained undisclosed. All respondents are young principals with 11-to-20-year work experience but not-over-5-year management experience.

#### 2. Research instrument

The structural open-ended questionnaires in order to gain an insight into principals' perceptions of effective implementation of educational policy were formulated by reviewing the effective implementation framework of George W. Bush Institute and indicators for effective policy development and implementation of School Wide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT). Then questionnaires were reviewed by five Chinese and Thai experts in policy implementation in schools to ensure its' fitting for rural primary schools in Guangxi China and Thailand. Subsequently, certain changes were made. The complete structural open-ended questionnaires were designed to ask the following questions:

1. How do you transform the government educational policy to fit the context and norm of school and communities, and the need of all stakeholders for creating a new change in your school?

2. Who do you define to be stakeholders of your school? How do these stakeholders participate and support in policy formulation, action plan development and plan implementation for achieving the goals of policy?

3. How do you develop an action plan? How do you develop each action plan to conform to all policy of the school?

4. How do you prepare and encourage teachers and staff to implement the action plan for achieving the goal of school policies?

5. How do you allocate and provide the needed and limited resources such as time, manpower, funds, and other facilities as well as technical support to implement the action plan to achieve the goal of school policies?

6. How do you track, monitor, and control the work as planned and the realization of work time and policy objectives?

7. How do you assess and evaluate the achievement of policies?

8. How do you apply and use the results of assessment and evaluation to improve the next policy and other policy implementation for creating continuous

improvement?

9. How do you show and communicate the transparency of policy implementation to stakeholders and to the public?

10. Please give suggestions and other opinions on effective policy implementation that could be conducive to the implementation of the policy.

### 3. Data collection and analysis

Due to pandemic virus, Semi-structured questionnaires with face-to-face interviews were not proper to adopt for collecting data. Therefore, principals of rural primary school in Guangxi, China and Thailand were asked to write their opinion on the structural open-ended questionnaires and some ambiguous answers were confirmed by speaking through the application WeChat or Line. The expressions were identified, analyzed, and synthesized to summarize the meaning and essence of information. To ensure data accuracy, the analysis result of each questionnaire was sent to that participant to confirm again, and the review on rules and regulations about policy implementation in public primary schools was done by educational experts.

The rigorous analysis ensured that the key themes from the answers of questionnaires were identified and analyzed. Then these themes were summarized and applied to the descriptive analysis.

## Results

### Results of China

To transform government educational policy to fit the contexts and norms of schools and communities, and the needs of all stakeholders for creating a new change in school, management, especially principals, should first understand and interpret the relevant educational policies of the government and should clarify the direction of the policies. Then combined with the humanistic environment of community and parents need to formulate appropriate policies with their own characteristics of schools. Moreover, schools should comply with the requirements of social development to implement various education policies. The objectives of the government's educational policies are the top priority in schools' policy formulation.

The achievement of policies' goal must be accepted and supported by stakeholders. The respondents categorize stakeholders as teachers, parents, community, departments in school, other government agencies and people. Before communicating with the stakeholders, school executives should perceive the relationships

among the stakeholders clearly whether they are good or inseparable, then to pursue the involvement and the support from stakeholders in several ways. Meetings with all stakeholders shall be arranged for understanding the sharing goal of school, for participating in policy formulation, and for discussing how to implement policies in order to achieve a win-win situation between families and schools. Schools should maintain the communication and manage the relationship with parents in a variety of channels to lead them to become educational partners and allies such as creating a parental participation platform by WeChat or Line, designing reasonable content and establish scientific norms of participation. Since close contact with stakeholders can motivate them to participate actively and to cooperate with schools' administrative work, these stakeholders should place special emphasis on changing the approaches of education in teaching and management, including some in-depth reforms in evaluation methods. Moreover, teachers and other staff should take their responsibilities wholeheartedly to serve people and make them feel confident that their children are progressing both physically and mentally, thus schools can get support in various resources such as funding and labor force, etc.

The formulation and development of various working plans in line with all school policies are the blueprint for the realization of school management objectives under the guidance of the Party's educational policy, and the superior. The school managements should accurately grasp the core meaning; carry out in-depth study and publicity; earnestly implement the fundamental tasks; and strictly follow the formulation. Principals should put their management style into the school planning; have a clear idea of what and how to do; optimize the allocation and plan strategies; strengthen measures and efforts; seize opportunities and take advantage; and have responsibilities and pay attention on monitoring as taking action to control various contradictions and eliminate various interferences in the planning process. In addition, they should clarify work ideas to all staff, and make correct decisions and seriously practice.

Schools should develop the effective working methods, and appropriate environment to implement the action plan for achieving the goal of school policies. The school managements should pay attention on setting up various incentives to fully recognize teachers' talents and work. Principals should disintegrate the purposes of plan and assign responsibilities fairly to each department or



teachers by putting each staff in a suitable position in which the responsibilities should be unambiguous, concrete and not abstract. Then headmasters should clarify the specific responsibilities; the content and time limit; the responsibility accountability system; and the reward and punishment measures. Rewards and punishment system should be objective, fair, reasonable, and appropriate. At the same time, the executives should pay attention to monitoring each environment in the implementation plan, understanding the situation fully, controlling the serious working atmosphere, guiding the idea, and taking action. Furthermore, schools should promote excellent teacher performance to the society and the public through media and social activities.

The allocation and providing the needed and limited resources are vital to operate the action plan successfully. The management should carefully consider all aspects of schoolwork; accurately grasp the development and changes of the internal factors and external environment of schools; understand and act according to the objective of law and regulations; and truly unify subjectivity and objectivity. The executives should give full consideration to all fields of education, and to the interests of the state, collectives, and individuals to comprehensively balance the allocation of workforce, financial and material resources. In the process of school allocation, there should be a backup resource to solve the problems that may occur in the implementation process. Finally, the resource allocation should be for the benefit of students

In monitoring the implementation of the planned work to meet the timeline and goals of each item, a realistic and practical work system should be established as well as the supervision from all stakeholder groups is needed to be strong. As the school executive's role in supervising, reviewing, and controlling the implementation of policy, they should have correct ideas, such as innovative educational ideas, and ideas of changing education and management, which comply with the laws and rules of education. Additionally, they should be aware of different characteristics of students' physical and mental development, which is an important indicator for running a school and the monitoring and controlling the project operation. Finally, monitoring and controlling process should be fair and open. And finally, the evaluation has been concluded to assess the achievement of policies. The assessments of the project should be quantified in all aspects following certain criterion and the assessing indicators should be consistent with the

goals and purposes of project under the inspection of several appraisers such as head teacher, school education division, moral education department, etc. Then the results will be reported to principals and school leaders and publicize to all stakeholders.

The continuous improvement is a key objective of schools' educational policies. Schools apply the combination of problem-oriented and school situation from the assessment results to revise the school direction and to strengthen the supplement of internal power. In order to improve the implementation of the next policy, schools should regard to the issues as follows; 1) insufficient funds: schools should concentrate on saving expenses and spending effectively within limited funds; 2) outdated teaching concepts and methods: teachers should strive to study modern educational theory, to learn psychological knowledge, to absorb new achievements in modern educational scientific research, and to adhere the combination of theory and practice, which conform with modern students' psychology and the times they live in; 3) education management system: the education management system must be continuously improved as time changes, and the behavioral changes of teachers and students. Furthermore, schools can take advantage of the evaluation results to improve the requirements in carrying out the next policy from previous policy implementation. The transparency of policy implementation is an essential part in inducing the collaboration and support from stakeholders. The schools express their readiness to accept all aspects of public and government supervision and examination. Additionally, the school regularly shows the progress of its policy implementation to stakeholders or the public such as timely publicizing work progress and final results through school official social media account. The staff of project and other stakeholders have been notified regularly about the work to make sure the transparency in executing the plans.

According to educational reform and development, school's educational policies and work will continue to emphasize on the "simultaneous development of five education" as military and national education, utilitarian education, civic moral education, world outlook education, and aesthetic education, which are the foundation of integration to achieve mutual connection and integration on the basis of respective attention, and to truly cultivate modernized people of the times. In the future, school reform should be able to reflect the people-oriented concept, the real multi-party

participation and coordination, and the idea of diversified governance. Schools will place more emphasis on consultation, democracy, rules, and management by law.

### Results of Thailand

In order to integrate government educational policy with the context of the school, the norms of communities, and stakeholders' needs to formulate a new school's policies, school executives must fully understand the government's policy objectives and be able to convince all staff of the school to perceive such purposes, meanwhile, adopt the SWOT technique to analyze such internal and external environment of the school. In addition, all staff should be involved in the policy making. Finally, this new policy must be approved by the school council.

The action plan must be established after policy approval. School management, staff and stakeholders should create such plans together with perceiving the purposes of policies clearly through applying assessment results of former projects in which a new action plan shall conform with budget constraint, labor constraint, and other limited resources. In addition, the action plans should be made from the improvement of the pros and cons of the previous plans. Finally, all action plans should be reviewed for consistency with all school policies.

The participation and collaboration of stakeholders are the crucial factors on the effective policy implementation. Stakeholders must accept and strongly support policy implementation. Rural primary schools in Thailand categorize stakeholders into eight groups such as teachers, parents, communities, local governments, alumni, religious organizations, students, and non-governmental organizations. They play the role of policy maker through their representatives in school council, and the role of supporters to provide budget and labor forces. The responsibility of school council can be classified to five tasks as follows: 1) defining policies, goals and development direction of education quality, 2) understanding and giving suggestions for drafting action plans to meet the goal, 3) considering the feasibility and appropriateness of the operation method of the activities of projects in the action plan, 4) providing useful feedback to the school for continuous improvement, and 5) supporting and encouraging all staff of the school to implement policy as planned and with the goals. Thus, meeting with all stakeholders is a critical approach to understand the sharing goals of school policies through informing the advantage and necessity

of new policies with the essential analysis results, action plan and solution of expected problems. The stakeholders also express their opinions and offer criticism on new policies, suggesting the practical guidelines of policy implementation, and all participants vote for approving new policies to implement. Schools look for support from stakeholders through monthly school council meetings.

Staff engagements are critical to the success of the project. Schools should encourage teachers and staff in proper ways. The attitude adjustment activity should be organized to inform and clarify the reason and necessity of policy implementation, and all staff can express their opinion thoroughly leading to the reduction of obstacle and fallacy of work. Headmasters should assign jobs fairly, taking the staff's feelings into consideration. Schools should establish a team that all members have a chance for responsibility equally, and a challenging goal focused on benefit of students. Several staff engagement activities are always arranged to motivate and encourage teachers and other staff such as reward, honor certificate and workshop before starting projects. The executives should recognize staff's efforts regularly, sincerely support their work, and pay attention to their problems. A clean and livable working environment is a must for achieving the full capacity of staff. Moreover, the success of their work is also a performance indicator for promoting their benefits.

A successful project operation must gain sufficient resource allocation. The management analyzes the needed resources of each project and prioritize projects to allocate the limited resources properly and beneficially. School can call for supporting budget of various projects from several sources such as government budgeting, other government agencies, donation of private organization, and religious related activities. Schools may adopt the sufficient approach into allocation of limited resources: assigning task matching ability and skill of staff, establishing network with nearby schools to share resources, outsourcing some technology or tasks that the school staff lacks the skill or not enough staff to complete the tasks and asking for help from community or private organization. While the projects are implemented, there are always checks as to whether the ability of resources used are meeting such requirements and evaluating the use of resources for improving and developing resource management in various fields. Schools arrange the process of the tracking, monitoring, and controlling project implementation into three steps

as follows: 1) Planning; management and working team have a meeting to share idea and discuss about the purpose, direction, and method for tracking, monitoring and controlling project, then generate the criteria and evaluation plan, and inform teachers and staff about this plan. 2) Workshop; the evaluation team members have a meeting for rehearsal of understanding one day before evaluation date. 3) Follow-up meeting; management monitors the process according to the plan, and assisting working team to complete tasks smoothly and providing suggestions. In addition, schools have a periodic summary of operating results from the beginning stage until ending stage of plan implementation.

The assessment and evaluation of the achievement of policies are undertaken after projects are done. Management of schools define the assessment criteria and achievement indicators conforming goal and purposes of project to create the assessment tools, then analyze and prioritize indicators. Assessors evaluate project implementation as planned by authentic assessment and tools. Finally a report to the public and investigate feedback from stakeholders to improve a plan for next projects and to apply the results of assessment for continuous improvement. The management should understand and apply the Deming PDCA cycle into project implementation for improving the effectiveness of operation process continuously. Principals and teachers should hold a meeting to considerate the assessment results and suggestions, discussing the strength and weakness of project operation, proposing the approach to develop strength and to correct weakness into the summarized report. These approaches are employed into a new plan for the next projects to prevent reappearing problems or reduce the severity of the problems.

The policy support of stakeholders depends on the transparency of the policy to some extent. Schools should show the transparency, and communicate with stakeholders and society as follows: appointing members from stakeholders to be the Assessment Committee of policy implementation with schools, creating accurate and clear public awareness regularly in accordance with good governance, setting principles of transparency and moral, holding meetings to clarify and inform the current progress honestly to stakeholders and society, publicizing the results of the policy implementation continuously to all parties via social media and disseminating the results on news board of school.

Most respondents suggest that the main factors

on effective policy implementation are the sharing goals of all stakeholders, having a strong team ready for the changes, learning and sharing experience between teachers in different schools as well as the flexible operation based on the context of schools.

## Discussion

According to the findings from this research, the effective educational policy implementation can be expressed in the process of policy implementation as policy formulation, action plan formation, implementation as planned, assessment and evaluation, and monitoring and transparency.

To formulate schools' policies, the rural schools in Thailand and Guangxi China have the same approach to establish policies as integrating the government's educational policies with the educational environment of schools by consigning the first priority to government's educational policies. Since all schools' policies aim to improve student outcomes thus schools and community members, parent, and other stakeholders should work together (Stonemeier et al., 2016). Stakeholders of rural primary schools in China and Thailand included teachers, parents, communities, departments in school, other government agencies, people, local governments, alumni, religious organizations, students, and non-governmental organizations. To build the acceptance, participation, and support of all stakeholders in policies, school leaders should grasp the relationship among stakeholders by identifying stakeholder groups and their interests as well as the competing or aligned priorities between groups (Wicks et al., 2019). The openness meeting with all stakeholders is arranged to inform all dimensions of policy, share the opinions, and express some useful suggestions that create shared ownership and support for policy improvements, since stakeholders need to share a common vision and policies could not be implemented without active collaboration and participation from all stakeholders. Thus participation of all schools' staff and the cooperation of all stakeholders are the key to successful operation of projects (Stonemeier et al., 2016; Bishoge et al., 2019; Im & Kim, 2015; Angsor & Yusof, 2019; Day et al., 2019). Additionally, schools should communicate with stakeholders by social media platform such as WeChat or Line. Furthermore, stakeholders can engage the policy process through school council or vote in meeting for new policy approval (Angsor & Yusof, 2019). The rural schools should pay attention to the wholehearted responsibilities of staff to



make parents have confidence in the physical and mental progression of children, since the achievement of stakeholder collaboration represents all community members invested and interested in the successful outcomes of students (Stonemeier et al., 2016). The rural schools in Thailand categorize the group of stakeholders different from in Guangxi China, because of the distinction of social norms and culture. In addition, to build stakeholders support and participation in education policies, leaders think expansively about who the schools' stakeholders are (Stonemeier et al., 2016).

The action plans are formulated and developed under the guidance of the government's educational policy, the upper superior, and assessment results of the current state integrating with exclusive's management style in which the school management should accurately grasp the core meaning and goal, then they can clarify work ideas to all staff to perceive all aspects of action plan. This is consistent with the expression of Wicks et al. (2019). School leaders and all staff should work together in use of assessment results from former projects to formulate new action plan conforming purposes of policy, budget, manpower, and other limited resources, then review the consistency of the action plan to all school policy, since more effective practices may be supported by policies, and the policies will be approved by school council finally (Mundschenk & Fuchs, 2016; Richman et al., 2019; Stonemeier et al., 2016; Angsor & Yusof, 2019). They should employ the cost-benefit analysis to analyze budget constraints, timing constraints, and people capacity constraints (Sandt, 2020; Nahyan & All, 2017; Stonemeier et al., 2016; Wicks et al., 2019). Furthermore, school leaders create frequent, meaningful opportunities to discuss and receive feedback on a new policy or practice from stakeholders, to plan with them, to examine community's need, to assess feasibility of policy, and to identify barriers to implementation.

As primary school students are six to 12 years old, parental involvement in education referring to the interaction of parents with schools and their children to promote academic success have a significant impact on the learning of children (Hill et al., 2004). The involvement of parents with students have more education outcomes than non-involved parents' (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). The involvement of parents increases the success rate of students, boosts the satisfaction of parents and teachers, and improves learning climate of schools (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). In addition, there are the positive effect

of parental involvement in homework on the school's academic performance, thus parents should be encouraged to be involved in learning at home, decision-making, community collaboration, and they should join the parent conferences that are held at the beginning and the end of the semester which are the formal meetings and about child's progress and school policies (Echaune et al., 2015; Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017; Kurtulmus, 2016).

The staff engagement is a vital factor to operate action plan successfully. The rural schools should emphasize on encouraging teachers and staff through developing the effective working methods and appropriate environment for work; and tracking work closely (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012). Rural schools should focus to make all staff grasp and accept the necessary of policies through meeting and workshop; to set staff engagement activities; to be involved in the action plan and be a part of the project; to build an equal responsibility team that all team members have a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, accountabilities at every step and recognize the mutual effort and success (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012; Wicks et al., 2019). Nonetheless, rural schools should inspire staff by assigning jobs fairly, and admired their efforts by setting a trustworthy reward and punishment; and publicizing excellent performance of staff on social media quickly and consistently (Trullen et al., 2016; Wicks et al., 2019). The policy implementation involves significant training and coaching for staff involved in the implementation of a new policy; the limited competency of staff and insufficient training or lack of training are the main obstacles to the implementation of the project (Day et al., 2019; Corkett & Hastings, 2020; Brendle et al., 2017; Stonemeier et al., 2016). Thus, the policy implementation in rural schools both in Guangxi China and Thailand should pay more attention to this issue. Aside from such staff encouragement, a significant impact factor on the effective policy implementation is the providing and allocating resources usefully. School leaders should analyze and recognize the information of all aspects of schoolwork; the changes in environment; usual monitor resource usage and necessity as well as the objective of law and regulations to apprehensively balance the resource allocation for the maximum benefit of students. In addition, schools should seek supporting budget from several sources; establish school network to share resources; and outsource. School leaders must anticipate common pitfalls such as competing priorities, budget

constraints, and other limited resources for effective resource allocation (Wicks et al., 2019). Since budget constraints or uncertainty of future fund have a negative impact on the operation of the project, but the availability and quality of resources are the key to effective implementation of project (Day et al., 2019).

The school leaders should play the role as supervisor, reviewer, and controller in the action plan operation under the guidance of the basic laws and rules of education and innovative educational ideas, and with a fair and open process of tracking, monitoring, and controlling. For the reason that leaders keep track of perspective outcome to refine priorities throughout the process providing necessary support and participate in ongoing evaluation to resolve any conflicts as well as obstacles based upon data. Besides, schools set workshops and the follow-up meetings regularly, since team meetings utilize practices that promote quality and efficient functions, and continuous improvement (Mundschenk & Fuchs, 2016; Wicks et al., 2019; Stonemeier et al., 2016). However, leaders should have meaningful and flexible systems in place to measure the progress of the change such as tools for collecting data and regular check-ins with stakeholders. As long as the teaching staff feel they have flexibility and autonomy over practices, they will accept and feel ownership of that project. (Wicks et al., 2019; Day et al., 2019). After the projects are completed, the assessment and evaluation following the assessment criteria and achievement indicators should be completed, and the assessment results should be summarized and reported to school leaders and publicized to all stakeholders. Moreover, the feedback investigation should be done. The continuous improvement is the important goal of schools, the schools may apply the problem-oriented assessment results and school situation to revise the school direction; strengthen internal power; and amend some issues such as insufficient funds and education management system. Besides, the rural schools should apply the Deming PDCA cycle into policy implementation processes to evaluate effectiveness of new practices and identify needed supports, and continuous improvement cycles should become deeply ingrained in schools (Stonemeier et al., 2016; Wicks et al., 2019).

The transparency is the first priority of policy implementation. The schools should express the readiness and accept to supervision and examination of public and government in all aspects. School leaders should value transparency by publicizing work progress and results

regularly and openly using various channels and be attentive to the meetings to exchange work information between staff of project and stakeholders as well as to identify the ways to improve their communication (Stonemeier et al., 2016; Wicks et al., 2019). Moreover, schools should demonstrate through appointing stakeholders to be the Assessment Committee.

The effective implementation of educational policy in rural primary schools in Guangxi China and Thailand has similar direction as in policy formulation process, action plan process, stakeholders' participation and collaboration, teachers, and staff encouragement, monitor and control process, assessment and improvement process, and transparency. Nevertheless, policy implementation of rural schools in Guangxi China may lean toward regulations and bureaucracy or chains of command, and the encouragement system may focus primarily on the reward and punishment. Whereas rural schools in Thailand promote the involvement of teachers and other staff and encourages them with staff engagement approach. The rural schools in Thailand categorize the group of stakeholders that is different from Guangxi China because of the distinction of social norms and culture. Thus, the roles of stakeholders of rural schools in Guangxi China seem to be supporters to champion the policy implementation in order to achieve goals, while stakeholders of rural schools in Thailand play the roles of policy maker through school council or acting as supporters, participants and appraisers.

### Suggestions

Since the collaboration and participation of all stakeholders are important in the achievement of policy implementation, stakeholders should be involved in policy implementation process thoroughly. Schools should demonstrate the transparency of implementation process in various ways such as publishing the work progress and assessment result on social media.

The progress of information communication technology (ICT) and environment changes are swift at the present time, school executives must engage all stakeholders to be involved and support the implementation of policies and promote teachers and other staff to participate in team work including training and educating them to develop necessary skills and competency. In addition, school leaders must earnestly conduct the value of the assessment results for continuous improvement such as using the learning and sharing activities to thoroughly study the evaluation

results and summarize the issues that will be improved in a substantial way.

Apart from such considerations, elementary education research must be conducted with a larger group of similar participants or respondents and with other sources of information that include teachers and other staff, parents, and other stakeholders. This research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic forbidding face-to-face interviews for collecting data, and not allowing travel abroad. The use of online applications to communicate with respondents may not allow for in depth data collection.

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