Needs Analysis of E-Learning System for Multicultural Education in South-East Asia

In-Sook Lee
Department of Education
Sejong University
Seoul, R. of Korea
inlee@sejong.ac.kr

Abstract: The project aims to conduct a survey to collect data and information regarding the Situational Analysis of E-Learning System for Multicultural Education in Southeast Asia. From the data analysis, trends, issues and future efforts to promote multi-cultural education are presented in ASEAN perspective, along with possible barriers or support systems determining the rate of progress and changes in the conception and practices of multi-cultural education in formal education setting.

Background

Since the creation of APCEIU in 2000, in accordance of agreement between the Government of the Republic of Korea and UNESCO, APCEIU has enhanced the educational capacities of the UNESCO Member States in the region toward a Culture of Peace with experts, school teachers and teacher trainers. Established in 1997, SEAMOLEC is the 15th Center of SEAMEO with a mission to assist SEAMEO member countries in identifying educational problems and finding alternative solutions for sustainable human resources development through the application of open and distance learning. To develop the multimedia educational materials for teachers in the field of EIU in line with enhancing the quality of EFA (Education for All), APCEIU launched three-year project ROK-ASEAN Education Development Project 2007-2009: Multi-Media Educational Material Development for Multi-Cultural Society supported by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, Republic of Korea. In 2007, the Situational Analysis of E-Learning System for Multicultural Education in South-East Asia has been conducted in cooperation with SEAMOLEC. Pilot workshops to develop multimedia education materials will be organized in 2008 which will be launched and disseminated to various educational institutions in the world in 2009.
Research Goals

The project aims to conduct a survey to collect data and information regarding the Needs Analysis of E-Learning System for Multicultural Education in Southeast. From the data analysis, trends, issues and future efforts to promote multi-cultural education are to be presented in ASEAN perspective, along with possible barriers or support systems determining the rate of progress and changes in the conception and practices of multi-cultural education in formal education setting.

Research Framework

The survey questions are placed under four categories: 1) individual and organizational profiles of respondents, 2) teacher training for multicultural education, 3) teaching and learning environment, 4) student profile, and 5) support factors. The sampling procedures to identify participants in the survey adopted a purposive rather than random sampling methodology. The purposive sampling targeted the following categories and high/ere knowledge and awareness of multicultural education program and policies in his/her country as well as recommendations by senior administrators of participating institutions.

In the survey, 409 persons participated as respondents from 8 countries in South-East Asia such as 60 from Vietnam, 42 from Indonesia, 76 from Thailand, 45 from Malaysia, 31 from Singapore, and 42 from Cambodia, 60 from Brunei Darussalam, and 53 from Laos PDR. Respondents are administrators & teachers, researcher educators/trainer, director and researchers in key educational research institutes, scholars in Multicultural Education and related fields, specialists or NGO specialists in key curriculum development institutes, and policy makers in Ministry of Education.

The method of data collection is through survey to selected categories of respondent. The instrument for data collection is questionnaire, which consists of Likert scale items and open-ended items as well. The survey aims to identify situations and needs prior to developing multimedia materials for teacher training and school use in multicultural education with SEAMEO member countries. The survey questions are placed under four categories: 1) individual and organizational profiles of respondents, 2) teacher training for multicultural education, 3) teaching and learning environment, 4) student profile, and 5) support factors.

Analysis of E-Learning System For Multicultural Education In Asean

Teacher Training for Multicultural Education
Three infrastructures of hardware, software and humanware are basically available at teacher training site in the participating countries. As a whole, qualified instructors in teacher training in multicultural education (humanware) and a fast and reliable internet connection (hardware) turn out to be the two most important teacher training infrastructure for multicultural education. However, humanware including qualified instructors in teacher training in multicultural education and skilled ICT & e-learning support staff to maintain multimedia training materials is perceived as the least available infrastructure. Teaching material development and student motivation techniques are the urgent training contents for teacher training in multicultural education in general. In terms of training methods, individual learning using multimedia materials and e-Learning program using the Internet are the high needs for development for teacher training in multicultural education in the participating countries.

Teaching & Learning Environment

*Infrastructure for multicultural education:* The participating countries urgently need human-ware including qualified teachers in multicultural education, skilled ICT support staff, and skilled personnel to assist in integrating ICT in classroom at school. In addition, a fast & reliable internet connection and adequate numbers of computers for students use might need continuous consideration as critical support systems for multicultural education at school site.

*Multicultural issues in formal education sector:* ‘Multicultural & intercultural education’ might need more consideration for including in multicultural education curriculum. Moral and ethics education, environmental education, values education, citizenship/civic education, and cultural values education appear ongoing steady issues for teaching and learning multicultural education at schools in the participating countries.

*Instruction and learning methods for multicultural education:* Field trips, extra-curricular activities, and small group discussion might be ongoing steady instruction methods to be utilized for teaching and learning multicultural education at schools in the participating countries. However, research and field work appear to need more extensive use in multicultural education curriculum. Especially case-based learning/problem-based learning might need more consideration including in multicultural education curriculum.

*School subjects which include multicultural topics:* Perceived importance of including multicultural topics in subject areas and current inclusion for those topics in subject areas in general correspond. Considering the perceived importance and inclusion, Moral education, History, National language, Social studies, and Citizenship/civics might need the high consideration including in teacher training as well as school curriculum for multicultural education.
Student Profile

Students’ proficiency level in key issues of multicultural education: Students are in general not highly proficient with most of the issues of multicultural education. However, relatively more proficient issues are (1) moral and ethics education, (2) values education, (3) environmental education, (4) citizenship/civic education and (4) cultural values education. On the contrary, students are not very proficient in the issues of (1) interfaith dialogue education, (1) conflict resolution (3) dialogue civilization, (4) anti-discrimination education, and (4) Global interdependence. In addition, the perceived proficiency level of each issue basically corresponds with the perceived importance and offering of each issue. This consistency might allow us to anticipate offering certain issues of multicultural education at school might lead students to enhance related proficiency level successfully.

Students’ interest level in key issues of multicultural education: Students are in general interested in most of the issues of multicultural education. Students’ high interests in Moral and ethics education, Environmental education, and Values education basically correspond with the perceived importance by the respondents (teachers only) and the current inclusion in the school curriculum. However, students are neither well accessible to nor clearly proficient with ‘Multicultural/intercultural education’. Considering this inconsistency, ‘multicultural & intercultural education’ might need more consideration for including in multicultural education curriculum and teacher training program.

Students’ interest level in instruction and learning methods: Students prefer learner centered and ICT-based learning. Considering the perceived importance by respondents (teachers) and students’ preferences at the same time, field trips, extra curricular, and small group discussion might be the best and easiest instructional methods to be utilized for teaching and learning multicultural education at schools in the participating countries. Considering students’ preference in ‘learning by ICT’, individual learning using multimedia material, and networked computer based learning, those methods are still ‘to-be-utilized’ for multicultural education. However, there might be a high possibility that students’ interests heavily depend on teachers’ ability. In fact, this implies the importance of teacher training in instruction and learning in the area of multicultural education.

Support Factors for Successfully Implementing Multicultural Education

Teacher training program is the most important success factor in implementing multicultural education. Educational budget and instruction and learning methods also get top high consideration. On the other hand, community support or interest, parental support or interest, ICT support staff, and national, provincial or local policies & regulations are the least answered.

Teacher training program might be the urgent support system for the participating countries to successfully
implement multicultural education, considering its importance and low availability. Educational budget and instruction and learning methods with relatively high availability, need continuing supply to the participating countries for their success in multicultural education implementation.

Implications For Multicultural Education In ASEAN

From the survey analysis, various trends, issues, and future efforts to be considered for promoting multi-cultural education in the participating countries were identified and suggested as follows:

The participating countries perceive multicultural education is very important and their students are in general interested in most of the issues of multicultural education. However, the students are not highly proficient with most of the issues of multicultural education. Students’ high interests in Moral and ethics education, Environmental education, and Values education basically correspond with the perceived importance by the teachers and the current inclusion in the school curriculum. ‘Multicultural & intercultural education’ might need to be included in school curriculum and teacher training program, considering its perceived importance, students’ low accessibility, and low proficiency. Moreover, Moral and ethics education, environmental education, values education, citizenship/civic education, and cultural values education appear ongoing steady issues for teaching and learning multicultural education at schools in the participating countries.

The participating countries integrate multicultural topics in some way or other in various subjects, instead of operating independent multicultural subject as curriculum. The typical school subjects including multicultural topics are Moral education, History, National language, Social studies, and Citizenship/civics. In fact, the rates of integration appear slightly different among the countries probably depending on their values and social system. This dispersion and diversity might result in barriers in developing teacher training programs for multicultural education which are commonly operating for all the participating countries as well as selecting right target training audience from the participating countries. In order to break those barriers and serve the best to divergent needs and situation of the countries, APCEIU should conduct further analysis on common training contents, under the premise of including ‘teaching material development’ and ‘student motivation techniques’

Field trips, extra-curricular activities, and small group discussion are steady instruction methods for teaching and learning multicultural education at schools in the participating countries. However, research, field work, and especially case-based learning/problem-based learning need more consideration including in multicultural education curriculum. As a matter of fact, students prefer learner centered and ICT-based learning. Considering students’ preference in ‘learning by ICT’, individual learning using multimedia material, and networked computer based learning, those methods might need to be more utilized for multicultural education. However, there might be a
high possibility that students’ interests heavily depend on teachers’ ability. In fact, this implies the importance of teacher training in instruction and learning in the area of multicultural education.

Not all of the participating countries have sufficient ICT or e-learning infrastructure in multicultural education. Considering a fast, reliable internet connection and adequate numbers of computers for students use are critical support systems for multicultural education at school site, some of the countries should ensure to build hardware infrastructure for multicultural education at school site. Fortunately, all the participating countries seem to agree and ready to support the multicultural education through ICT and e-learning with their strong commitment to develop massive hardware procurement to optimize the integration of multiculturalism into various subjects in all levels of education. Although some countries have more advanced stages than the others, especially the needs for human-ware at school including ‘qualified teachers in multicultural education’, ‘skilled ICT support staff’, and ‘skilled personnel to assist in integrating ICT in classroom’ turn out to be the most urgent for the participating countries. Among those, teacher training program might be the urgent support system for the participating countries to successfully implement multicultural education, considering its importance and low availability.

Teacher training program is the most important success factor in implementing multicultural education. However, qualified instructors for teacher training in multicultural education (human-ware) are the most important teacher training infrastructure but the least available infrastructure. As a whole, shortage for teacher trainers in multicultural education might work as a critical barrier against operation of teacher training programs in a short term and operation of multicultural education at school in a long term. Regarding teacher training program for multicultural education, ‘teaching material development’ and ‘student motivation techniques’ are the most core contents for teacher training in multicultural education in general. In terms of training methods, individual learning using multimedia materials and e-Learning program using the Internet are the high needs for development for teacher training in multicultural education in the participating countries.

References