



Homeschooling in Southern Thailand: Status and proposed guidelines for learning process management

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ABSTRACT

The objectives were: 1) to examine the status of learning process management regarding homeschooling, and 2) to propose guidelines for homeschooling families in Southern Thailand. The research was divided into two phases: Phase 1 involved quantitative data collection from 25 homeschooling families in 10 southern provinces via a questionnaire, and Phase 2 concerned qualitative data gathered from focus group discussions with nine participants using printed handouts as a research instrument. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, with qualitative data processed for content analysis using constant comparative techniques. The findings revealed that homeschooling families agreed at a high level regarding learning process management. Within each domain, usage of media and learning resources, learning and instructional methods, and learning assessment were at high levels with only curriculum recorded at a neutral level. Qualitative data results suggested four learning process management guidelines: 1) families, homeschooling networks, and Educational Service Area Offices should research, develop the curriculum, and establish independent homeschooling centers; 2) public agencies should create channels to facilitate continuous learning among family communities; 3) families should be assisted and encouraged to access and share the learning resources of educational institutes through a Memorandum of Understanding; and 4) education officers should assess the needs and requirements of homeschooling families and maintain communication via simplified terminologies.

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Introduction

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2540 (1997), Section 4 states the principles of rights and freedom as, "The human dignity, liberty, and equality of the people shall be protected." In the B.E. 2550 (2007) Constitution, Sections 49 and 50 declare, "The provision of education by

professional organizations or the private sector, alternative education by the people, self-tuition, and life-long learning shall be protected and promoted by the State as appropriate. All people shall enjoy academic freedom. Education, training, learning, teaching, researching and disseminating such research according to these basic principles shall be protected" ([Secretariat of the House of Representatives, 2008](#)). These concepts are the key principles of educational reform mentioned in the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and subsequent amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002]).

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The Thai educational system has evolved along a new path and three types of education now exist: 1) formal, 2) non-formal, and 3) informal; credits accumulated by learners shall be transferable within different education platforms (Ministry of Education, 1999). Educational diversity has expanded in the school system, especially regarding alternative education. Currently, some alternative schools are religious-oriented or nature-based, emphasizing the link between teacher, student, curriculum, and community through a belief system (Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education, 2008). Homeschooling has been identified as a novel alternative in the Thai educational system. A definition of home education, (*ban rian* in Thai) or homeschooling is when a parent, relatives, or other knowledgeable people as instructors conduct basic education at home, based on the legal rights enshrined in the Constitution, which focuses on student-centered learning management and Thai culture with the family as the central pillar. Thus, homeschooling is emerging as an alternative way of effective learning, following approved national education standards (Bureau of Educational Innovation Development, 2012; Udom, 2005).

Homeschooling in Thai society has been continuously developing and evolving as a unique learning style toward specific family goals. However, many operational problems have been encountered. For example, a new homeschooling family usually lacks general experience and trust in the foundations of this new educational concept. Registration with the Educational Service Area Office (ESAO) is required, and the ESAO must be satisfied that the intentions of the families applying to homeschool their children are honorable. However, ESAO officials have excessive workloads with high personnel turnover. Performance evaluation tools for student evaluation are lacking, with weak concrete support from the Ministry of Education (Office of Education Council, 2004; Office of Education Council, 2007).

These homeschooling situations relevant within Southern Thailand are reflected at the national level. A research project on guidelines for homeschooling learning management in Southern Thailand by Sompong, Panthong, Langnui, Kraisem, and Kaewnapun (2010) asserted that there were only 20–25 participating families; thus, compared with numbers in other regions, homeschooling in the south is still in its infancy.

Data collected from an extensive literature review, coupled with extensive discussions determined that many families are interested in homeschooling within Southern Thailand. However, most of the interested families have never been involved with home education before. There is a distinct lack of understanding regarding learning process management, homeschooling-based learning assessment, and coordination issues with ESAO officers which create barriers to entering the home education domain. Thus, the researcher was interested in investigating the status of learning process management from these perspectives for homeschooling families in Southern Thailand to reflect the current status of this alternative education approach.

Objectives

- 1) To examine the status of learning process management regarding homeschooling families in Southern Thailand
- 2) To propose learning process management guidelines for homeschooling families in Southern Thailand

Methodology

Scope of Content

This study focused on examining the concept of homeschooling process management adopted by families in Southern Thailand, based on the educational management guidelines promulgated in the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999). Homeschooling process management domains are outlined in Section 24 comprising curriculum, learning and instructional methods, the usage of media and learning resources, and learning assessment (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999).

Population and Data Collection

The data collection procedure consisted of two phases. Quantitative data were collected in Phase 1 regarding learning process management for a population of 25 homeschooling families in Southern Thailand during the 2014 academic year. The population was derived from 10 provinces (Songkhla, Satun, Chumphon, Phuket, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Krabi, Yala, Phang Nga, Trang, and Surat Thani) referenced by the Southern Education Area Offices, Bureau of Educational Innovation Development, and the Thai Homeschool Network. The respondent from each family was a guardian, father, mother, or teacher approved by the homeschooler's family. In Phase 2, qualitative data to determine guidelines for homeschooling learning process management were collected through focus group discussions with nine participants comprising 1) four homeschooling families with a minimum of three years' experience, and 2) five officers from ESAO, or teachers involved in homeschooler's learning assessment, or related staff from alternative education institutes.

Research Tools

The Phase 1 tool was a questionnaire formulated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (coded as 1) to strongly agree (coded as 5). The questionnaire consisted of three sections: family general information, learning process management (curriculum, learning and instructional methods, the usage of media and learning resources, and learning assessment), and open-ended questions for learning process management guidelines. In Phase 2, the tool comprised a list of focus group discussion questions concerning learning process management guidelines in Southern Thailand derived from Phase 1 data analysis.

Data Analysis

The quantitative results from Phase 1 were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while qualitative data from the Phase 2 focus group discussions were assessed using content analysis and constant comparative techniques. All data were summarized regarding learning process management guidelines for homeschooling families in Southern Thailand.

Results

Status of Learning Process Management of Homeschooling Families

Mean ranges were applied to the interpretation of the results (1.00–1.50 = strongly disagree, 1.51 to 2.50 = disagree, 2.51 to 3.50 = neutral, 3.51 to 4.50 = agree, and 4.50 to 5.00 = strongly agree). Most families agreed that they managed three individual domains of homeschooling process management: the usage of media and learning resources ($M = 3.8472$, $SD = 1.4049$), learning and instructional methods ($M = 3.7250$, $SD = 1.4071$), and learning assessment ($M = 3.6930$, $SD = 1.3600$). The curriculum fell within the neutral level ($M = 3.4292$, $SD = 1.5400$), indicating that the homeschooling families agreed or disagreed equally to employ the curriculum in learning process management (Table 1).

In the curriculum domain (Table 2), two items were recorded at the strongly agreeable level as curriculum implementation was significantly flexible and adaptable to student's readiness and interest ($M = 4.7500$, $SD = 0.5316$), and families applied a way of life and student's proficiency as a key indicator for curriculum design to significantly respond to learning quality development based on student's interest ($M = 4.7083$, $SD = 0.6903$). However, two items revealed a disagreement: integration of international curriculum to a lesson plan ($M = 2.4583$, $SD = 1.7189$), and use of the subject groups following the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BECC) ($M = 2.2500$, $SD = 1.2938$).

Learning and instructional methods (Table 3) displayed four items with strong levels of agreement: 1) activities were flexible in time, place, and content, based on student's interest, lifestyle, and family's job ($M = 4.6667$, $SD = 0.7614$), 2) the adaptable education period positively influenced learning design and outcome for students' potential development, based on their aptitude and interest ($M = 4.6250$, $SD = 0.7109$), 3) families emphasized experience-oriented learning where students could absorb diverse knowledge simultaneously ($M = 4.5833$, $SD = 0.7755$), and 4) families occasionally observed student's learning traits to track continual progress

Table 1

Overall attitude of homeschooling families on learning process management

Attitude of homeschooling families	$\mu(\sigma)$	Result
Curriculum	3.4292 (1.5400)	Neutral
Learning and instructional method	3.7250 (1.4071)	Agree
Usage of media and learning resources	3.8472 (1.4049)	Agree
Learning assessment	3.6930 (1.3600)	Agree

Table 2

Respondents results for curriculum

Curriculum	$\mu(\sigma)$	Result
1.1 Curriculum design corresponding to family's educational style	4.2500 (1.1516)	Agree
1.2 Use of the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BECC) as a guideline for learning experience management for homeschoolers	3.1250 (1.4836)	Neutral
1.3 Study of diverse ideas and philosophies as a guideline for learning experience management	3.1250 (1.4238)	Neutral
1.4 Use of standard indicators of the BECC for integrated lesson plans	2.7083 (1.2329)	Neutral
1.5 Application of livelihood and student's proficiency as key indicators for curriculum design to significantly respond to learning quality development based on student's interest	4.7083 (0.6903)	Strongly Agree
1.6 Use of the subject groups following the BECC	2.2500 (1.2938)	Disagree
1.7 Parallel use of the subject groups with experience units because the student has not yet discovered his/her interest and aptitude	2.5000 (1.4446)	Neutral
1.8 Use of experience units as direct experience from authentic activities and life skills	4.4167 (0.8805)	Agree
1.9 Integration of the international curriculum to lesson planning	2.4583 (1.7189)	Disagree
1.10 Curriculum implementation with significant flexibility and adaptation regarding student's readiness and interest	4.7500 (0.5316)	Strongly Agree
Curriculum overall	3.4292 (1.5400)	Neutral

($M = 4.5833$, $SD = 0.5836$). Conversely, there was disagreement in the five following aspects: 1) use of academic tests as another type of learning method, 2) home education by families affected cooperation with ESAO (in registration with ESAO), 3) setting the beginning and end of a semester following the curriculum, student's learning activities or family lifestyle, 4) a fixed number of field trips to different provinces monthly, and 5) setting the beginning and end of semester according to the school's schedule as 2.4167 ($SD = 1.5012$), 2.3333 ($SD = 1.6061$), 2.0000 ($SD = 1.3188$), 1.8750 ($SD = 1.0347$), and 1.5000 ($SD = 1.0632$), respectively.

Usage of media and learning resources (Table 4) showed strong agreement with four items: 1) parents were counted as the most significant personal media because students trust and absorb parental and mentor thoughts and behavior ($M = 4.7500$, $SD = 0.5316$), 2) families used both internal and external media as learning resources ($M = 4.7083$, $SD = 0.6241$), 3) families viewed the house and its surroundings as the most worthy and beneficial area to study and learn ($M = 4.5833$, $SD = 0.7173$), and 4) families mainly supplied media and learning resources based on student's interest areas ($M = 4.5000$, $SD = 0.7223$). There was disagreement for two aspects: application of schools as additional learning resources ($M = 2.4583$, $SD = 1.4136$), and application of public agencies to support and give students a chance to reach

Table 3

Respondents results for learning and instructional methods

Learning and instructional method	$\mu(\sigma)$	Result
2.1 Family members' decision in subjects or learning activity	3.9167 (1.2825)	Agree
2.2 Consultation with experienced families to strengthen confidence and understanding	3.2083 (1.5030)	Neutral
2.3 Specified terms of activity selection to encourage efficient learning development	2.8333 (1.4646)	Neutral
2.4 Emphasis on experience-oriented learning for simultaneously varied knowledge	4.5833 (0.7755)	Strongly Agree
2.5 Adjustable daily schedules by discussing together in real time	4.2083 (0.9771)	Agree
2.6 Attendance in a tutorial class of their interest with unlimited time	3.6250 (1.4982)	Agree
2.7 Student's learning commitment based on aptitude and interest to develop and train discipline in self-directed learning	4.1250 (1.1910)	Agree
2.8 Commitment to some house work to build up student's responsibility and discipline	4.0833 (0.9743)	Agree
2.9 Arrangement of experiential learning activities to elevate critical thinking, observation, inquiring, and self-problem solving such as apprenticing, trading,	4.1667 (0.8681)	Agree
2.10 Flexibility in time, place, and content based on student's interest, lifestyle, and family's job	4.6667 (0.7614)	Strongly Agree
2.11 Value on extra learning together with student	4.4167 (0.5836)	Agree
2.12 Use of several tricks in learning activities to match student's learning style	4.0000 (1.2854)	Agree
2.13 Application of student's knowledge in daily life	4.2500 (0.7940)	Agree
2.14 Respect of student's private time daily to serve their needs and interests	4.2917 (1.2329)	Agree
2.15 Selection of teachers by experience skills or being specialists in a field	3.5417 (1.5598)	Agree
2.16 Participation in group activities with other homeschooling families to provide students a chance of collective learning through social interaction	3.1250 (1.2959)	Neutral
2.17 A fixed number of a field trips to different provinces each month	1.8750 (1.0347)	Disagree
2.18 Instruction via questions to spark critical thinking and reflect understanding	3.9167 (0.7755)	Agree
2.19 Occasional observation of student's learning traits to track continual progress	4.5833 (0.5836)	Strongly Agree
2.20 Supply of exercises or books mainly based on their curiosity	4.0000 (0.7223)	Agree
2.21 Stimulation of critical thinking and connection of skills from learning activities toward the family's way of life	4.0833 (0.8297)	Agree
2.22 Learning activity selection befitting age to seek self-fondness and aptitude	4.3333 (0.7020)	Agree
2.23 Use of academic tests as another type of learning method	2.4167 (1.5012)	Disagree
2.24 Respect of all family members to share their opinion on family matters	4.3750 (0.8242)	Agree
2.25 Constant learning management without term ending	4.3750 (1.1349)	Agree
2.26 Setting the beginning and end of a semester according to the school's schedule	1.5000 (1.0632)	Disagree
2.27 Setting the beginning and end of a semester following the curriculum, student's learning activities, or family lifestyle	2.0000 (1.3188)	Disagree
2.28 An adaptable education period has a positive influence on learning design and outcomes for student's potential development based on aptitude and interest	4.6250 (0.7109)	Strongly Agree
2.29 Home education by families affects cooperation with ESAO (in case of registration with ESAO)	2.3333 (1.6061)	Disagree
2.30 Determination of the educational management time (for curriculum, learning experience, assessment, educational privilege allocation, etc.) with more freedom than the school system	4.2917 (1.3667)	Agree
Learning and instructional method overall	3.7250 (1.4071)	Agree

wider knowledge and activities following interests ($M = 2.1667$, $SD = 1.3077$).

When analyzing sub-areas within the learning assessment domain (Table 5), the families strongly agreed that

they evaluated their children by constant observation to develop and boost interest or aptitude ($M = 4.5833$, $SD = 0.6539$). At a high level of agreement, the majority of respondents concurred in authentic assessment and

Table 4

Respondents results for usage of media and learning resources

Usage of media and learning resources	$\mu(\sigma)$	Result
3.1 Application of internal and external media and learning resources	4.7083 (0.6241)	Strongly Agree
3.2 Allocation of the house and surrounding area as a learning space as most worthy and beneficial	4.5833 (0.7173)	Strongly Agree
3.3 Supply of media and learning resources based on student's main interests	4.5000 (0.7223)	Strongly Agree
3.4 Parents counted as the most significant personal media	4.7500 (0.5316)	Strongly Agree
3.5 Application of various instruction media to support student's knowledge inquiry	4.3750 (0.7697)	Agree
3.6 Search for local wise men and specialists to reinforce the experience and magnify the student's view	3.4583 (1.3506)	Neutral
3.7 Application of radio, TV, multimedia, and computers for self-searching and self-study	3.9583 (1.4289)	Agree
3.8 An agreement to use technology with the student, such as the Internet	3.8750 (1.3290)	Agree
3.9 Placing importance on several child development toys, for instance, cup stacking, blogs, jigsaw puzzles and Rubik's cube	3.5833 (1.4116)	Agree
3.10 Application of separate places to grow in the diverse experience of the student	4.4583 (0.8836)	Agree
3.11 Family studies learning and instructional programs of E-learning and e-books	3.0833 (1.8396)	Neutral
3.12 Utilization of online media such as Facebook, websites, and YouTube for student's channel of communication and expression	3.8333 (1.5511)	Agree
3.13 Exploration and search for learning resources around the house to foster a sense of membership of the community and local love	3.9167 (1.2129)	Agree
3.14 Application of schools as additional learning resources	2.4583 (1.4136)	Disagree
3.15 Application of public agencies to support and give students a chance to gain wider knowledge and activities following interests	2.1667 (1.3077)	Disagree
Usage of media and learning resources overall	3.8472 (1.4049)	Agree

personality development evaluation, with holistic change rather than using documents. The students did not only assess themselves, but they also took decisions regarding any test attendance. On the other hand, evaluation of learning outcomes according to the BECC, based on eight primary subjects ($M = 2.0000$, $SD = 1.2158$), was perceived as a disagreement.

Learning Process Management Guidelines for Homeschooling Families

Learning process management guidelines in the south were conducted using focus group discussions. The results from the participants suggested the cooperation of all stakeholders in sharing three important notions as a fundamental mindset for understanding homeschooling. These were 1) the principle of participation for all, 2) knowledge of the homeschooling learning process, and 3) self-recognition for all family members to become a learning person. Four guidelines of learning process management were proposed as follows:

1) Curriculum

All stakeholders (families, homeschooling networks, and Educational Service Area Offices) should research and develop the curriculum together. Government agencies should support the establishment of independent homeschooling centers where homeschooling families can receive recommendations and assistance for curriculum development, help in implementing the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BECC) B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008), and adaptability in learning process management to measure and

evaluate homeschool learning. The centers will allow participation and cooperation so that everyone can access and share continuous collective learning.

2) Learning and instructional method

ESAOs in each province should support and create a community channel for continuous learning among the families to increase knowledge resources for more appropriate student study. Homeschooling families and related officers, as staff of Supplementary Education Groups, and educational supervisors should arrange frequent appointments to meet and discuss with families to exchange views and report on the progress of instructional management which always relies on the particular learning requirements of individual students.

3) Usage of media and learning resources

The families and ESAOs should create information maps for media and learning resources as a database, and gather information from senior homeschooling families with long experience. A database will facilitate learning processes. To start this database, families registered with ESAOs can be used as a pilot study. Moreover, related public and private agencies through the Bureau of Educational Innovation Development, Office of the Basic Education Commission, and ESAOs should support homeschooling families to access shared learning resources through collaboration with schools or institutes which have laboratories. A memorandum of understanding should be created between both parties to allow homeschooling students to access the laboratories when available.

Table 5
Respondents results for learning assessment

Learning assessment	$\mu(\sigma)$	Result
4.1 Evaluation following BECC in learning outcomes based on eight basic subjects	2.0000 (1.2158)	Disagree
4.2 Evaluation following the criteria and implementation of BECC in learning outcomes based on experience units	3.2817 (1.6806)	Neutral
4.3 Evaluation following various concepts applied to a guideline of learning process management	3.7917 (1.1381)	Agree
4.4 Family's participation in all processes of learning assessment for student	4.3333 (0.9631)	Agree
4.5 Increase knowledge and basic understanding in learning assessment from the National Education Act, principles, and regulations	3.5417 (1.1025)	Agree
4.6 Student's self-assessment via reports or discussions	3.3750 (1.4982)	Neutral
4.7 Use of external evaluators to build family's confidence and reflect student's learning behavior	3.1667 (1.5228)	Neutral
4.8 Cooperation and benefits from assessment committees consisting of families and ESAO officials to assist registration with ESAO	3.2083 (1.5030)	Neutral
4.9 Priority to evaluate student's personality development; behavior, thinking, problem-solving, attitude to themselves, family, and society	4.0830 (1.1765)	Agree
4.10 Exercises as a tool to assess student's academic development through homemade, and school-made exercises	2.9167 (1.3486)	Neutral
4.11 Learning evidence used by family and external evaluator; drawing, activities diary, portfolio, and photos	3.9583 (1.3015)	Agree
4.12 Evaluation via interviews, development demonstrations or learning method documentary presentations	4.0000 (1.0215)	Agree
4.13 Evaluation via constant observation to suggest and boost student's interest or aptitude	4.5833 (0.6539)	Strongly Agree
4.14 Emphasis on internal changes or outcomes of student rather than record-keeping and documents	4.3750 (0.7697)	Agree
4.15 Paying attention to collecting student's learning evidence for registration with ESAO or foreign institutes	3.7500 (1.2597)	Agree
4.16 Need for an educational assessment report of student each year	4.0417 (1.1221)	Agree
4.17 Allowance for self-decision in taking any test designed to measure the educational proficiency compared with a school or public sector, for instance, National Test (NT), and Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET)	3.5833 (1.4421)	Agree
4.18 Co-assessment by families and committees, the need of understanding creation with evaluators such as ESAO officials, educational supervisors, and experts	3.8333 (1.3726)	Agree
4.19 Better quality of authentic assessment through various methods than by only a test	4.3333 (1.0072)	Agree
Learning assessment overall	3.6930 (1.360)	Agree

4) Learning assessment

Related officers should try to understand homeschooling families' needs and perceive a difference between the principle of formal education and alternative education. The school system gives priority to true and steady learning according to regulations, in contrast with homeschooling where there are no rights or wrongs and everything is counted as learning. No matter how high or low a test result score might be, students have already passed a learning experience. We should not apply the rules used in schools as indicators for homeschoolers. Also, ESAO staff should communicate with families via simplified terminologies for precise understanding. Families need help in understanding operational technical terms that often appear in documents. For example, registration with the ESAO requires details of the curriculum, indicators, evidence, learning outcomes, and models. These terminologies are alien for the majority of families with no formal educational foundation, and they also experience difficulty when contacting officials. Therefore, simple wording is essential for effective communication.

Discussion

A small number of homeschooling families scattered throughout the southern provinces have attempted to continually organize their homeschooling programs. Four domains of learning process management are discussed below.

Curriculum

The majority of homeschooling families have flexibly implemented and significantly adapted a curriculum, also known as a lesson plan, following the student's readiness and interest. The families prioritized their lifestyle and student proficiency development as a core for curriculum design. They were not interested in the subject-group type of learning management based on the BECC, but placed importance on an experience-units type of approach to achieve goals, while also supporting students through authentic activities for a more profound understanding of life skills. Most homeschooling families employed a holistic outlook which harmoniously integrated subjects with lifestyles (Anthony, 2009; Bureau of Educational Innovation Development, 2012; Chakpisuth, Thongdeelt, Sukongkarattanakun, Thiasakun, & Sompong, 2005; Ray, 2010). The learning process content disregarded educational level, concentrating more on problem-based content rather than curriculum as a key indicator. A wide framework based on educational belief, goals, family status, student's need, and age appropriateness was determined and applied. Occasionally, the curriculum content or lesson plan did not reach their expectations. However, instead of complaining, families should cherish the time and experiences that they share together. Life is a gift and should be appreciated (Field & Field, 2007).

Learning and Instructional Methods

Homeschooling parents aimed to arrange activities with flexibility in time, place, and content following student's interest, aptitude, lifestyle, and the family's jobs. This adjustable educational period positively influenced learning design and outcome for the student's potential development. Families preferred to emphasize experience-oriented learning where students absorbed varied knowledge simultaneously. Families placed less importance on academic tests as a type of learning method, with no set timetables for beginning and ending semesters, nor following school schedules. The time flexibility aspect did not hinder cooperation with the ESAO and other institutes where families had registered. Techacupt and Yindeesuk (2005) and the Office of Education Council (2008a) stated that the homeschooling learning process used both internal and external components to elevate the students' knowledge, understanding, aptitude, and competency to develop their potential and equip them with the skills necessary for success in life. Anthony (2009) added that homeschooling learning process management required strong collaboration between family members.

Usage of Media and Learning Resources

Parents were counted as the most significant personal media because students trusted and absorbed parental and mentor thought and behavior. Families also used both internal and external media and learning resources and allocated an indoor area and house surrounding as a beneficial and worthy learning space. Instructional methods, such as exploring and searching for learning resources around the house, fostered a sense of community membership and developed a local love of the surroundings and environment. Moreover, families supplied media and learning resources based on individual student's interest to reinforce varied experiences comprising 1) different sources; parents' workplace, library, book store, market, etc., 2) printing media and multimedia for self-study utilized for communication channels and expression, and 3) local wise men and specialists to broaden outlook and viewpoints. Nevertheless, the findings revealed low priority in utilizing local schools to support and provide students with the chance to access wider knowledge and activities. Kunzman and Gaither (2013) pointed out that, "Beyond social networks, homeschoolers often rely heavily on information-rich resources like libraries and the internet." Widespread application of Internet systems improves connection with the community and has become a learning and instructional resource for homeschooling families (Basham, Merrifield, & Hepburn, 2007).

Learning Assessment

Homeschooling families applied both internal and external student assessment methods. Most parents acted as assessors and gathered evidence of student learning through diaries, photos, videos, and Facebook. Families always gave students the opportunity for self-assessment.

Families registered with their local ESAO evaluated the criteria and implementation of the BECC for learning outcomes based on experience units and valued the opinion of an external assessor. Most homeschooling families did not emphasize assessment based on the eight basic core subjects and followed a principle of alternative education. The Office of Education Council (2008b) noted that families must assess the students by themselves using several evaluation formats, and then submit the relevant documents based on a mutually agreed practice. The best assessment method should be diversified and correspond to the students' learning styles. Contrary to prior expectations, the method prescribed by the Office of the Basic Education Commission did not conform to the learning methods of families since homeschooling follows education via life application principles which differ from the school system. This concept is similar to formative assessments in the 21st century which should be performed effectively and constantly. Homeschooling tests do not aim at pass/fail determination but allow students to identify their own learning status with the ability of effective problem-solving (Office of Education Council, 2013; Panich, 2012).

Conclusions

Homeschooling is well known and widespread in society as an alternative education format with unique learning process management. Homeschooling offers a unique approach to learning based on individual interests and aptitudes. These processes consist of a curriculum, learning and instructional methods, usage of media and learning resources, and learning assessment which are flexible and adaptable. Each family performs a particular learning process to cater for age, time, place, content, and way of life. Hence, to support the progress of homeschooling, all stakeholders should regularly share mindsets of homeschooling management. A user-friendly handbook detailing the key principles with clear content or illustrations emphasizing the desired objectives would be extremely beneficial. Scant research regarding Thai homeschooling exists and additional studies are required in key areas to enhance the acceptance of this new mode of education throughout the country.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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