
How Does the Current Wave of Globalization Affect Thailand's Curriculum?

Teaching Social Studies under AEC and ASEAN Community

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Abstract

With the approach of 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community or AEC has gradually moved from being a buzzword to becoming a reality that Thailand has to face. Thailand has been preparing for this for quite some time now. In curriculum and instruction, some changes have already occurred. The content of the curriculum were changed in order for schools to equip students with knowledge and skills to become part of the ASEAN community and to function well in the bigger economic community of AEC. This paper will delineate how the curriculum of social studies in Thailand has been changed as Thailand prepares to enter the AEC and ASEAN community. In this paper, I seek to demonstrate how the current wave of globalization—the ASEAN regional integration and the AEC—affects the core process of education—the teaching and learning, not only the system of education as earlier scholars of globalization and education have suggested. I will do so by using the case of social studies curriculum as an example of how the regional integration affects education.

Introduction

With the approach of 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community or AEC has gradually moved from being a buzzword to becoming a reality that Thailand has to face. Initially, AEC was to be launched on January 1, 2015. However, as a result of the meeting in Phnom Penh back in 2012, leaders of ASEAN countries decided to delay the launch to December 31, 2015 in order for member countries to prepare for rules and regulations (Ashayagachat, 2012). Thailand has been preparing for this for quite some time now. For example, since 2009 the government has set a five-year-plan (2009-2014)

for all sectors to prepare for entering AEC. In education, the government has allocated approximately 3,000 million baht¹ for the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education at all levels (Somboon, n.d.). With this budget, it is hoped that Thai students would have knowledge and skills that matched with the needs of the ASEAN market. To conform with other ASEAN countries, the academic calendar of universities in Thailand has been adjusted; the starting of date of the academic year has been changed from June to August to be congruent with universities in other ASEAN countries.

In schools, we have already witnessed many changes. If anyone were to drive past a public school, s/he would see not only the national flag of Thailand, but also the ASEAN flag or flags of all member countries in some schools. Taking one step further into the school, one would find something called an “ASEAN glossary board” introducing vocabulary in Thai, English, and one or two other ASEAN languages. If one happened to be in time for the morning assembly, one would hear not only the national anthem, but also the ASEAN song sung by students. On special occasions like sports day or open house day, it is not difficult to spot students clad in the national costumes of various ASEAN countries. However, inside a classroom, one would find that things have hardly changed. Teachers continue teaching using the old styles. The curriculum remains the same. This is not surprising. Scholars who study globalization and education policy have suggested that globalization may affect the education system², but rarely changes the core process of education which includes the curriculum and instruction (McGinn, 1997; Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002). However, a closer look into the social studies curriculum of schools in Thailand in the year 2014, reveals that some changes have already occurred. This was part of the preparation to enter into AEC. The content of the curriculum were changed in order for schools to equip students with knowledge and skills to be part of the ASEAN community and to function effectively in the bigger economic community of AEC. This paper will delineate how the curriculum of social studies in Thailand has been changed as Thailand prepared to enter the AEC and ASEAN community. In this paper, I seek to demonstrate how the current wave of globalization—the ASEAN regional integration and the AEC—affects the core process of education—the teaching and learning, not only the system of education as earlier scholars of globalization and education have suggested.

Globalization and Education

Joel Spring (2009), a prominent scholar of globalization and education, aptly defines globalization of education as “worldwide processes, discussions,

and institutions affecting local educational practices and policies” (p. 6). In detail, Spring (2009) states that due to the process of globalization, educational practices in several nations have become similar because the practices of schools are no longer determined by policymakers in that nations alone, but are influenced by global discourses and international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), OECD etc. This point is similar to that made by Rizvi and Lingard (2010). That is, in the globalized world, the values and system of education of certain countries are no longer under the determination of policymakers within each country. The networks, international and transnational agencies, and regional integration play a larger role in determining the education system that the country should adopt, how money should be spent and what and how schools should teach. Moreover, owing to advances in communication technology, ideas about education practices and information are shared instantaneously throughout the world. Policy borrowing happens in many parts of the world. English has also become the language of business and language of instruction in schools. And as people move more freely around the world, many countries are forced to rethink their policies and practices regarding the education of migrants and multiculturalism. Education, especially higher education, is also viewed as a commodity or a service to be marketed, delivered, exported and imported. In short, globalization has a tremendous effect on education.

Torres (2009) points out that in modernized and globalized world, one common concern of many nations is how education can produce a labor force with higher skills to meet the demands of a competitive global economy. As globalization implies increasing contacts across national boundaries, another challenge for education is how to foster democratic multicultural citizenship. Besides transnational economic activities and cultural and political reconfiguration, globalization deeply affects how people interpret and respond to these changes (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). In other words, globalization affects “the ideological formation and social imaginary” of people (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p.23). It is the social imaginary and ideological formation in the era of globalization that influences education policy and many countries.

The current wave of globalization—establishing the ASEAN Community—as Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have stated, is particularly evident in Thailand. ASEAN was formed in 1967 with five countries—Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines—as the original members. The original aim was to promote regional solidarity and cooperation. Later, its membership expanded to include Brunei in 1984, Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999, making ten countries. The

combined population of the member countries totals around 600 million. The current ASEAN Community was initiated in 2007 at the 12th summit in Cebu, Philippines by leaders of ASEAN countries aiming for regional integration and cooperation in all aspects by the year 2015. In essence, the ASEAN Community has three pillars of cooperation, namely, the ASEAN Political and Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Each pillar or cooperation has its own aims and roadmaps which are stipulated in its blueprint. The ASEAN Political and Security Community (APSC) aims at promoting peace and democratic values in the region and in the world. The APSC is comprised of components such as political development in the region, the shaping and sharing of values, the prevention and resolution of conflict, and post-conflict peace building (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, n.d.a). The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) aims at building solidarity and mutual understanding through the forging of a common ASEAN identity and improving the quality of life of people in ASEAN countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, n.d.b.). The AEC aims at creating regional and economic integration through a single market and production base and to strengthen ASEAN economic competitiveness. It also strives for economic development within member countries in order to compete in the global market economy (Association of Southeast Asian Nation, n.d.c.). Ideally, the AEC will lead to the free movement of products, services, resources and capital which in turn will result in an increasing share of foreign funds and investments in sectors such as business, industry, education, health care, tourism, and logistics. It is undeniable that the three pillars of ASEAN Community are equally important. However, people are sometimes mistaken that the ASEAN Community is synonymous with AEC or cooperation only in the area of economics because of AEC pervasive and ubiquitous usage. AEC is a reference to the common market for products and resources, human resources included. In the case of Thailand, AEC offers a market ten times larger compared to the current domestic market³. The free mobility of human resources will also enable people in seven professions—doctors, dentists, nurses, architects, engineers, accountants, and surveyors—to move from one ASEAN country to another for professional reason provided that there is common certification or criteria for professional qualification among member countries (International Labour Organization and Asian Development Bank, 2014).

In order to reap the benefits of integration in AEC, all member countries must prepare themselves. Otherwise, what is perceived as an opportunity might become a threat. For example, the bigger market will not

mean a bigger opportunity for manufacturers in countries that are not prepared. Rather it will mean more competition among manufactures trying to sell the same merchandises. The opportunity of being able to work in other countries means nothing if we do not possess the necessary skills that will make us qualify to do so. Language skills, professional skills and cultural competency are among the numerous skills needed. A study conducted by University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce showed that the Thailand workforce in those professions targeted for free mobility did not understand the effect of AEC on their career and were not aware of the opportunity to be able to work in other ASEAN countries (Pratruangkrai, 2013). The same study also revealed that when professional skills are not significantly different, Thai professionals in those seven occupations lagged behind their counterparts in ASEAN countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, in terms of language skills. Unlike other ASEAN countries, notably Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines where English is their official language or language of instruction in schools, Thailand's only official language is Thai. Thus, Thailand is in urgent need of developing the competency in English or other languages common among ASEAN countries, in order to be on a par with our regional counterparts in other ASEAN countries. Besides languages, knowledge about the cultures of other ASEAN countries, as well as the awareness of being an ASEAN citizen and its implications are also indispensable. Thailand did not do well in this aspect either. According to the survey conducted with 2,170 students studying at higher education level in ASEAN countries asking whether they considered themselves citizens of ASEAN, only 67 percent of Thai students participating in this survey said "yes" (Thompson & Thianthai, n.d.). In the same vein, Thai students demonstrated that they knew little about ASEAN in terms of the year ASEAN was founded and the ASEAN flag (Table 2). As Table 2 shows, Thai students ranked last in terms of general knowledge about ASEAN.

When AEC is fully effective, an important factor that will make a country survive and thrive is the quality of education of that country. The result of a survey of competitiveness among 144 countries by World Economic Forum⁴ shows that among countries in ASEAN, Thailand ranked seventh in its quality of basic education (K-12) (Table 3) and ranked eighth in the quality of higher education (Table 4) (Information Technology and Communication, Ministry of Education, n.d.). All of these statistics are not favorable. They all point to the fact that Thai students are not prepared for entering AEC. Thai students lack awareness and knowledge about ASEAN and the implications of AEC membership. They lack skills in languages and the quality of education is not good. This all indicates that if Thailand wishes to function well and reap

the benefit of AEC, it needs to improve the knowledge and skills of its human resources through education immediately.

How AEC affects education in Thailand

In preparation for AEC, Thailand has done several things. The Ministry of Education's strategic plan, "Preparation for AEC" was posited as one of the important agenda items to be dealt as a priority equal to "Improving the quality of education in the southern border provinces" and "Increasing competitiveness and sustainable development through education". In order to fulfill this plan, Thailand set aside a significant budget. In 2013, the overall budget to preparation for AEC is approximately 39 million baht⁵. Of this budget, Ministry of Education received approximately 5 percent or 1610 million baht. The Ministry of Education also selected 68 schools and declared them as special-type schools under the "Spirit of ASEAN" project. These schools are to serve as pilot schools that teach about ASEAN and teach other languages such as English and ASEAN languages. These special-type schools comprises 30 Sister schools, 24 Buffer schools, and 14 ASEAN-focus schools. Sister schools' curriculum emphasize on developing knowledge about ASEAN including its multi-cultures, English language skills and skills in information technology. Buffer schools are those located in the provinces that border neighboring countries, such as schools in Narathiwat province next to Malaysia and schools in Surin province bordering Cambodia.

Table 1: Awareness of being an ASEAN citizen

| Countries | Percentage of respondents who answered "yes" |
|-------------|--|
| Laos | 96.0% |
| Cambodia | 92.7% |
| Vietnam | 91.7% |
| Malaysia | 86.8% |
| Brunei | 82.2% |
| Indonesia | 73.9% |
| Philippines | 69.6% |
| Thailand | 67.0% |
| Myanmar | 59.5% |
| Singapore | 49.3% |

Table reproduced from the result of the study by Thompson and Thianthai (n.d.)

Table 2: General knowledge about ASEAN

| Country | The year that ASEAN was founded | Identification of the flag of ASEAN | Average percentage of correct answers |
|-------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| | Percentage correct answer | Percentage correct answer | |
| Indonesia | 65.6% | 92.2% | 78.90% |
| Laos | 68.4% | 87.5% | 77.95% |
| Vietnam | 64.7% | 81.3% | 73.00% |
| Brunei | 44.3% | 98.5% | 71.40% |
| Malaysia | 53.0% | 80.9% | 66.95% |
| Singapore | 47.8% | 81.5% | 66.95% |
| Myanmar | 32.5% | 85.0% | 58.75% |
| Cambodia | 36.6% | 63.1% | 49.85% |
| Philippines | 37.8% | 38.6% | 38.20% |
| Thailand | 27.5% | 38.5% | 33.00% |

Table reproduced from the result of the study by Thompson and Thianthai (n.d.)

Table 3: World Economic Forum Ranking for Basic Education (compared among ASEAN countries)

| Rank | Country | Rank (cont.) | Country |
|------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| 1 | Singapore | 6 | Laos |
| 2 | Brunei | 7 | Thailand |
| 3 | Malaysia | 8 | Vietnam |
| 4 | Indonesia | 9 | Cambodia |
| 5 | Philippines | 10 | Myanmar |

Table 4: World Economic Forum Ranking for Higher Education (compared among ASEAN countries)

| Rank | Country | Rank (cont.) | Country |
|------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| 1 | Singapore | 6 | Laos |
| 2 | Malaysia | 7 | Cambodia |
| 3 | Brunei | 8 | Thailand |
| 4 | Indonesia | 9 | Vietnam |
| 5 | Philippines | 10 | Myanmar |

Buffer schools emphasize the languages of neighboring countries with which they share borders, knowledge about ASEAN, cross-cultural skills and skills in information technology. Each Sister School and Buffer School has to create nine network schools and mentor them on ASEAN curriculum, language of instruction and other skills relating to ASEAN. ASEAN-Focus Schools are those that integrate contents about ASEAN into the curriculum. Schools of these three types are to serve as an ASEAN Information Center that disseminates information about ASEAN to the community and other schools.

Besides the allocation of budget and designation as special-type ASEAN schools, the Ministry of Education encourages schools in Thailand to formulate “ASEAN Curriculum”. This ASEAN curriculum was initiated by the Southeast Asian Minister of Education Organization (SEAMEO) who saw the need for countries in ASEAN to have common curriculum. Following this initiative, in at the meeting of SEAMO in Indonesia, in 2012, the “ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook” was first distributed to member countries in order for them to use as a guideline to the subsequent development of an ASEAN curriculum in their own countries. The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook was developed by SEMEO, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and educators from the ten ASEAN member countries. It was first conceived in 2008 and revised twice in 2012 before being distributed at the SEMEO meeting in October of that year. In order to develop the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook, the survey of curricula, textbooks, and instruction materials on ASEAN used by schools in member countries was conducted during 2008 to 2010. The survey was conducted to examine the evolution of contents about ASEAN across grade levels and subject areas. The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook aims to work as a guideline for primary and secondary schools in ASEAN countries to adopt “*the appropriate basic education pedagogy, content and assessment through the integration of cultural identity awareness principles, values and practices in appropriate learning areas and processes*” (USAID, 2012, p. VI) (Italics added). The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook aims at fostering the idea of “connectedness” and understanding among people in students’ adjacent communities, among people in the same country, among people in other ASEAN countries and among people in other countries or other regions in the world. It is hope that through this curriculum, students would gain knowledge and skills that will enable them to live and work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook does not aim to supplant the existing curricular of ASEAN countries. Rather, it is clearly stated that the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook should work as a complement to the current curricula of each country. The

ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook is comprised of five curriculum goals or themes that are congruent with the mission of ASEAN and reflect ASEAN identity. Those five themes are: “Knowing ASEAN”; Valuing “Identity and Diversity”; “Connecting Global and Local”; “Promoting Equity and Justice”; and “Working together for a sustainable future” (USAID, 2012). “Knowing ASEAN”, as the name suggests, aims for students to learn about the structure of ASEAN, the creation and intention of ASEAN, and the accomplishments and challenges for ASEAN. “Valuing Identity and Diversity” aims to help students explore and appreciate the diversity of different cultures as well as to understand the influences that shape the cultures. “Connecting global and local” aims to help students see the interconnection between things that happen in ASEAN communities and things that happen in other regions of the world. “Promoting equity and justice” aims to promote equality, justice and fairness in countries in ASEAN by equipping students with political, scientific and philosophical tools and references to cope with such issues. The last goal, “Working together for a sustainable future” aims at building awareness among students about constraints in limited resources and the need for sustainable development both in their communities and among ASEAN countries and the world. The Sourcebook further links each theme into four areas of contents, or what they call “pathways” (Figure 1). The four pathways are people, places,

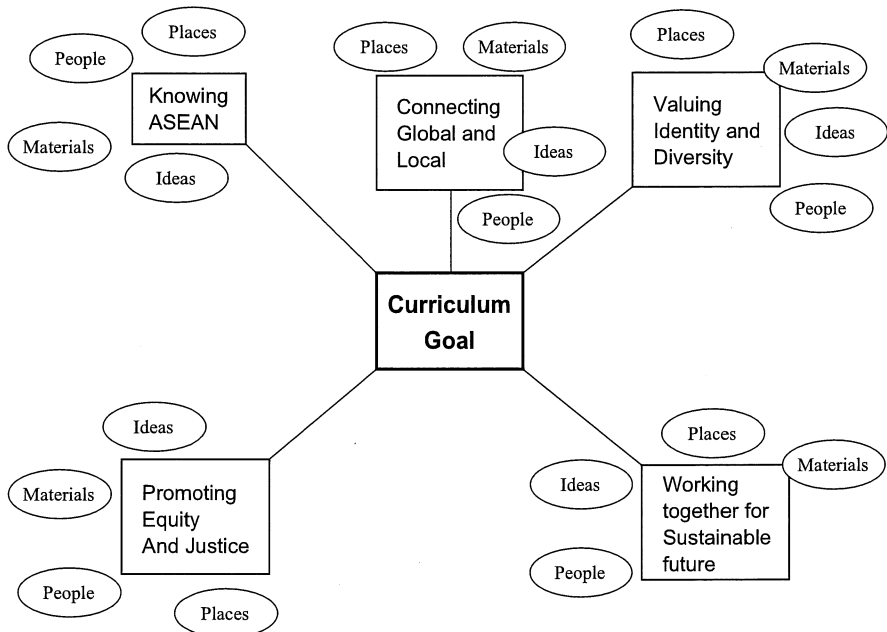


Figure 1: Five Goals of ASEAN Curriculum Woven into Four Pathways

materials and ideas. People include individuals, ethnic groups, governments and citizens, cultural heritage, health, security, gender and generational roles within families and cultures. Places denote physical features, spatial patterns, ecosystems, climates, and dynamic and interactive natural forces. Materials are tangible objects such as manufactured products, natural resources, arts and crafts as well as archeological artifacts. Ideas mean values, belief systems, worldviews, philosophies and religions, forms of governance, technologies, adoptions and adaptations (USAID, 2012).

Thus, in practice, the teacher should teach each theme with contents related to all of the four areas. For example, when teaching the theme “Knowing ASEAN”, teachers should teach students to know how: “people of ASEAN share commonalities and can work together to achieve peace and mutual prosperity; countries of ASEAN face many of the same challenges and opportunities and that ASEAN provides mechanisms and policies to bring the region together; ASEAN’s regional policies regarding the exchange of technology, energy and health-related assistance will bring widespread economic, cultural and physical benefits; the exchange of ideas across ASEAN promotes the well-being of nations and individuals” (USAID, 2012, p.8). These four areas or pathways should be taught in an interrelated way and with continuity through three education levels, namely upper primary; lower secondary; and upper secondary. It is stated in the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook that teachers should help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills by using “essential questions” to urge students to think when teaching the five themes in the four interconnected pathways. The Sourcebook gives an example of questions that teachers should ask such as: “Why did nations join ASEAN?” and “Why is diversity in a group a source of strength?”(USAID, 2012, p.9). From the assertion that teachers use of essential questions to enhance critical thinking skills, it is clear that the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook intends for schools to teach beyond the mere facts about ASEAN such as the founding date of ASEAN, the meaning of ASEAN flag, the traditional dress and food of ASEAN countries. The intention of the ASEAN Curriculum as stated in the Sourcebook is to build knowledge and understanding of people and cultures of ASEAN countries for students. In the next section, I will discuss how the ASEAN Curriculum has been implemented in Thailand.

The Implementation of ASEAN Curriculum in Thailand

In preparation for entering ASEAN community, the Ministry of Education of Thailand had set the desirable characteristics of Thai students in ASEAN community as follows (Office of Basic Education Commission,

2011):

1. Having knowledge about politics, economics, social issues and cultures of ASEAN countries as well as knowledge about ASEAN charter
2. Be able to communicate in at least two languages (English and another language of ASEAN countries)
3. Be able to use information and technology wisely and creatively
4. Be able to reconcile problems in a peaceful way
5. Be able to Work and live with others in harmony
6. Accept and respect cultural diversity
7. Having leadership skills
8. Aware of social problems and try to rectify them
9. Value the equality of human beings
10. Exchange ideas and sharing knowledge
11. Having critical thinking skills
12. Be able to demonstrate self-control
13. Having pride in being a Thai and being a member of ASEAN
14. Share responsibility for ASEAN community
15. Aware of the significance of being in ASEAN community
16. Leading a democratic life and adhere to the principle of good governance and peace
17. Accept religious diversity
18. Leading life according to the principle of sustainable economy

These desirable characteristics of Thai students go in line with the kind of learners that the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook aims to develop. After the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook was introduced, policymakers, education officers at the Ministry of Education, teachers and administrators set out to prepare for the implementation. First, the English version of ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook was translated into Thai by several parties, i.e., officers at the Ministry of Education, academics in universities, and textbook publishers. Education officers in the Ministry of Education started examining Thailand's 2008 Basic Education Curriculum to explore contents about ASEAN in the existing curriculum and whether and how it could be integrated into the ASEAN Curriculum. The following Tables 5-9 demonstrate how Thailand's social studies curriculum in primary and secondary education is compatible with the five themes of ASEAN Curriculum (Bureau of Academic Affairs and Educational Standards, 2013).

The Ministry of Education then formulated the guideline for

implementing ASEAN Curriculum and held a seminar to inform teachers and administrators about the implementation of ASEAN Curriculum in schools in 2013. The Ministry of Education planned to implement ASEAN Curriculum in the Sister schools, Buffer schools, and ASEAN-focus schools first and expand the implementation to other schools later. According to the implementation guideline, the ASEAN Curriculum should be integrated into the eight subject areas, namely Thai language, foreign languages, mathematics, science, social studies, religions and cultures, physical education and health education, art, housework occupation and technology—from grade one to grade twelve. Schools can also teach content and concepts provided in the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook as a separate subject, i.e., ASEAN study. Schools can also hold activities to provide a chance for students to learn the five themes in the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook. The time devoted to learning about ASEAN also varies depending on the school. The Ministry of Education does not stipulate the forms and timeslots for teaching content about ASEAN in schools. At this point, the implementation of ASEAN Curriculum in schools is operated under a voluntary basis.

Table 5: Comparing Thailand’s social studies curriculum to the theme “*Knowing ASEAN*” of ASEAN Curriculum

| | Learning Objectives of Thailand’s Social Studies Curriculum | Indicators | Learning Objectives of ASEAN Curriculum | Contents about ASEAN |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| P R I M A R Y E d u | Objective: S 4.3 - Understand the history of Thailand, Thai culture, Thai wisdom - Proud of being Thai and maintain Thainess | Indicator: P 1/1: Identify and explain symbols that represent Thailand and act properly towards the symbols P 1/2: Identify the cultural places in the community | - ASEAN is the integration of countries in Southeast Asia - Countries in Southeast Asia are economically, geographically, historically, and culturally connected before the establishment of ASEAN | - ASEAN countries will be stronger if we work together to achieve mutual goals - Geography and cultures of ASEAN countries |
| S E C O N D A R Y E d u | Objective: S 2.1 - Understand the traits of a good citizen and behave accordingly - Demonstrate good values and maintain Thai customs and cultures | Indicator: M 1/1: Abide by laws in protecting individual rights M 1/2: Identify how one can contribute to the society and the country M 1/3: Discuss about cultural values that influence the building of good relationship or cause misunderstanding M 1/4 : Express how to respect the rights of others and self | Individuals and groups are different but are related and connected | Individuals and groups are different but are related and connected |

Table 6: Comparing Thailand's social studies curriculum to the theme "Valuing Identity and Diversity" of ASEAN Curriculum

| | Learning Objectives of Thailand's Social Studies Curriculum | Indicators | Learning Objectives of ASEAN Curriculum | Contents about ASEAN |
|---------------|---|--|---|---|
| PRIMARY Edu | <p>Objective: S 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand and realize the traits of good religious followers - Sustain Buddhism or the religions of one's own belief <p>S 2.1: Understand and follow the duty of a good citizen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have good values and preserve Thai cultures and customs - Live harmoniously with others in Thai society and in the world | <p>Indicator:</p> <p>P 4/3: Know the code of conducts for religious ceremonies and important religious days</p> <p>P 4/1: Behave according to democratic ways and be a good member in society</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Celebration and ceremonies bring people together - Being a citizen of community, country and local | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities and code of conducts in religious ceremonies and festivals in ASEAN countries - Civic skills for becoming a good citizen of ASEAN countries |
| SECONDARY Edu | <p>Objective: S 1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the history and principles of Buddhism and other religions as well as the history of founders of those religions - Demonstrate good faith and follow religions' principles in order to live peacefully together | <p>Indicator:</p> <p>M 4-6/16: Believe in karma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess the situations and make ethical decisions - Demonstrate life goal to live peacefully with others in the country <p>M 4-6/18: Aware of values that determine beliefs and behaviors of people of other religions in order to eliminate conflict and live peacefully in the society together</p> <p>M 4-6/21: Analyze other regions' principles of living peacefully and persuade others to see the benefits of being good to one another</p> | <p>When people of different visions and cultures work together, it will result in problem solving</p> | <p>Understanding cultural identities of people in ASEAN countries will reduce conflicts and enhance cooperation in the region</p> |

Table 7: Comparing Thailand's social studies curriculum to the theme "Connecting Global and Local" of ASEAN Curriculum

| | Learning Objectives of Thailand's Social Studies Curriculum | Indicators | Learning Objectives of ASEAN Curriculum | Contents about ASEAN |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| P R I M A R Y E d u | Objective: S 2.1 - Understand the traits of a good citizen and behave accordingly - Demonstrate good values and maintain Thai customs and cultures - Live peacefully in Thai society and the world | Indicator: P 4/4: Explain cultural differences of people in local community | - People can be citizen of a community, country and local at the same time | - Several methods to connect with others through the elements of individual identity |
| S E C O N D A R Y | Objective: S 3.2 - Understand economic system and economic institutions, trade and the necessity for economic cooperation among countries in the world | Indicator: M 4-6/2: Analyze the impact of free trade under globalization to Thailand M 6/3: Analyze pros and cons of several forms of international economic cooperation | Globalization is originated from free trade movement and the access to market | Free trade effects producers and consumers at national, community and local levels |

Table 8: Comparing Thailand's social studies curriculum to the theme "Promoting Equity and Justice" of ASEAN Curriculum

| | Learning Objectives of Thailand's Social Studies Curriculum | Indicators | Learning Objectives of ASEAN Curriculum | Contents about ASEAN |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| P R I M A R Y E d u | Objective: S 2.1 - Understand the traits of a good citizen and behave accordingly - Demonstrate good values and maintain Thai customs and cultures - Live peacefully in Thai society and the world | Indicator: P 5/1: Demonstrate the behavior according to one's role, rights, freedom and duty of a good citizen P 5/2: Propose measures to protect self or others from the violation of children rights P 5/3 Appreciate Thai cultures that play a major role in living in Thailand | - Every society has a principle about equality and fairness but might define it differently - How the government issue laws and how they affect people's lives - News and information plays a major role in promoting equality and fairness | - Equality of people in ASEAN countries - Rights to be protected of people in ASEAN countries - Equality and fairness for people in ASEAN countries |
| S E C O N D A R Y E d u | Objective: S 4.2 - Understand the evolution of mankind from the past until present - Recognize the significance of change and its impact S 4.3: Understand the history of Thailand, Thai culture and Thai wisdom - Proud of being Thais and maintain Thainess | Indicator: M 1/1: Explain social, economic and political development of Southeast Asian countries M 1/2: Identify places of civilization in Southeast Asia M 1/1: Explain historical events in pre-Sukhothai period M 1/2 : Analyze Sukhothai's rise to power in several aspects M 1/3: Analyze the impact of Thai cultures and Thai wisdom in Sukhothai period and Thai society | Documents about country-building can shape people's lives | Receiving the correct information lead to an act of equality and fairness |

Table 9: Comparing Thailand's social studies curriculum to the theme "Working together for Sustainable Development" of ASEAN Curriculum

| | Learning Objectives of Thailand's Social Studies Curriculum | Indicators | Learning Objectives of ASEAN Curriculum | Contents about ASEAN |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| P R I M A R Y E d u | Objective: S 2.1 - Understand the traits of a good citizen and behave accordingly - Demonstrate good values and maintain Thai customs and cultures - Live peacefully in Thai society and the world | Indicator: P 2/3: Accept others' opinions, beliefs, and ways of life without prejudice P 3/2: Identify the ways of life of self and others in a multicultural context P 4/5 Propose ways to live peacefully in daily life | - We can develop our community if we care about one another | - Cooperation makes ASEAN countries thrive |
| S E C O N D A R Y E d u | Objective: S 3.2 - Understand economic system and economic institutions, trade and the necessity for economic cooperation among countries in the world S 5.1: Understand how several elements in nature influence one another - Use maps and geographical tools to search, analyze and conclude - Use information technology effectively S 4.2 - Understand the evolution of mankind from the past until present - Recognize the significance of change and its impact | Indicator: M 4-6/3: Analyze pros and cons of several forms of international economic cooperation M 4-6/2: Analyze the geographical impact on physical and natural disaster in Thailand and in the world M 4-6/2: Analyze important happenings that result in social, economic, and political changes until present M4-6/4 : Analyze world situation in the 21 st century | Integrating countries with common goals might face with a lots of challenges but will eventually achieve the goals Women significantly contribute to the development of a country | Integration and cooperation among countries can solve political, economic and social problems in ASEAN Women significantly contribute to the political, economic and social development of a country |

Table 5 to Table 9 show how concepts and content about ASEAN in ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook can be integrated into Thailand's 2008 social studies curriculum. From the analysis of the tables, it is apparent that while Thailand's social studies curriculum emphasized being a good Thai citizen—abide by laws, maintain Thai cultures and values, adhere to Buddhism and religious principles—the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook takes the concept of good citizen beyond country boundaries by asserting on understanding of other cultures and having civic skills . Moreover, ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook also emphasizes the significance of cooperation and regional integration among countries in Southeast Asia. According to officers in the Ministry of Education, when integrating content from ASEAN curriculum sourcebook into the Basic Education curriculum, teachers should pay attention to the objectives

stipulated in the Basic Education Curriculum as the first priority and integrate contents about ASEAN that fit with those objectives (Personal communication, 10 February, 2015). As of now, the integration of ASEAN Curriculum into the existing curriculum is not obligatory; it is premature to gauge the effect of ASEAN Curriculum on the curriculum, or whether it can change the cultural identity and values of Thai people.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Richard Hiam for his English language editing of this paper.

Notes

- 1 Approximately 100 million dollars.
- 2 As in the case of decentralization policy which spread from the advanced industrialized countries such as the U.S., U.K., and Australia to several developing countries.
- 3 The population in Thailand (as of 2014) is 67.2 million while the population of the ten member countries in ASEAN combined is around 608 million.
- 4 The survey data came from interviews with administrators, executives in several companies, and databases of UNICEF and UNESCO.
- 5 Approximately 1259 million dollars.

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