

AFRICA-ASIA UNIVERSITY DIALOGUE WORKSHOP NOTES

JANUARY 11-15, 2011, ANNIE'S LODGE, MALAWI

1. DAY ONE

Group B research aim, conceptual framework, reflection on previous meeting in Thailand

Remarks from Professor Yoshida- *Notes taken by Tran Thi Bich Lieu*

- Title of the research of each country can be different but must fit the common theme: "Financial and Decentralization Policies and Measures and Improvement of Educational Quality at School Level" as agreed on in Chiang Mai in 2009.
- There is need to focus on timetable to submit final report on time to CICE
- Country teams to submit mid-term report on **14th February, 2011** to Prof. Yoshida (yoshidak@hiroshima-u.ac.jp). This will be on each country team's progress up to the time of this workshop. Contents and structures depend on the country's progress. The papers submitted will be compiled into a report and will be submitted to Ministry of Education, Japan.
- Framework of the report is the same as agreed in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Need to identify reform stakeholders
- AAD key principles were reconfirmed to include comparability, excellence/quality, joint learning, output, and impact

Presentation 1: Elementary Schools in India: What Matters for the Outcomes?- Presented by Jandhyala B G Tilak, National university of Educational Planning and Administration, India

Notes taken by Tran Thi Bich Lieu

Question and Comments from participants

- What have been done for the group B's research?
- What data collection methods have been used? (e.g. how the information on out-of-school children has been collected?)
- What are research questions?

- How are government policies implemented for primary education?
- How does this data relate to decentralization policies and educational quality?
- Explain how to evaluate four levels of education quality?
- How can access pressure be solved?
- How close is this research to completion? What is the time-frame?

Presentation 2: *Implementation of Financial Policies in Vietnam and the Quality, Secondary Education since Decentralization- A Case Study of Hanoi City Presented by Vietnam National University in Hanoi, Vietnam*

Question and Comments from participants

- There are many types of decentralization models in Hanoi. How are you going to assess impact for each?
- Which part of the theoretical framework is the research going to centre on? This part should be coloured.
- What are the issues of transparency in Hanoi?
- Sample size?
- Relationship between decentralization policy and quality improvement

Presentation 3: *Decentralization and the implementation of policies for quality improvement at school level: the case of 'quality school' projects (PEQ) in Burkina Faso - University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (in absentia)- Presented by Professor Yoshida*

Question and Comments from Participants

- What is the relationship between school canteen and quality of education?
- The team has to identify two means of decentralization education PEQ and school
- The team should have clear indicators of quality education related to the canteen project.

- How are the PEQ and canteen project related? Are the two implemented in each school or they are implemented separately in different schools?

2. DAY TWO

Presentation 4: *An investigation into the initial improvements in primary schools as a result of the direct financial support to schools and decentralization in Malawi*
Presented by CERT, University of Malawi, Malawi

Notes taken by Lizzie Chiwaula - Malawi

Comments and Questions from participants

- Do schools get the DSS on time to do whatever they wanted to do.
- Is the team going to examine the impact on learning?
- Of the total expenditure, how much do the schools allocate to maintenance?
- What is the time schedule of the funds, i.e. do they receive it once a year?, at the beginning of the year?
- Are schools free to use the funds on things not listed on the budget?
- How long have the schools implemented DSS?
- Besides DSS, are there any other sources of funds for the school?
- What is the funding formula for DSS?
- How fast do district Education offices approve school submissions? Are there any challenges on that?
- What is the impact on quality of education?
- There is need to present the theoretical framework as it relates to education quality and DSS.
- What kind of research questions do you have?
- What is the likelihood of meeting the joint research objectives?
- There is need to put the key words in a framework and show how the subheadings e.g. Budgeting and procurement process, Use of DSS funds , Impact of DSS, Monitoring, Transparency and accountability issues, and Challenges are related to each other.

Comments from presenters

- Planning to include more respondents e.g. suppliers
- To do more on quantitative
- To look more at the process
- To revise the theoretical framework based on the comments.

Presentation 5: *Financial and Decentralization Policies and Measures and Improvement of Educational Quality at School Level: The case of Thailand*, Presented by Chiang Mai University, Thailand

Notes taken by Lizzie Chiwaula – Malawi

Comments Question and from participants

- The team distributed self administered questionnaires to 20 areas with 1900 schools, what is the likelihood of getting back all the questionnaires?
- Given that you are expecting to receive back 80% of the questionnaires, what mechanisms have you put in place to achieve this?
- With the large sample size, who is funding the study?
- With time limitations, it might be difficult to enter, analyze and produce a final report.
- Apart from pupil achievement, are you using other indicators on improvement of quality at school level? Can you please elaborate some of the aspects of indicators of quality to be used?
- Is the study mostly an opinion survey for the education directors?
- It is not clear how the research questions are related to each other and how they meet the study objectives.
- Will using a questionnaire/opinion survey be sufficient enough to get something on quality of education?
- There is need to revise the objectives because *“To systematically review available literature on the complex issue of educational quality within the reform of education context in Thailand”*, does not fit to be an objective.
- There is need to rephrase the research questions as well.

Comments from presenters

- Taken note of all the concerns and will do necessary revisions.

Presentation 6: *Effectiveness of Capitation Grant on Quality Improvement in Basic Education in Ghana Presented by University of Cape Coast, Ghana with Hiroshima University*

Notes taken by Phetcharee Rupavijetra, Thailand

- Relations between two presentations (by University of Cape Coast and Hiroshima University) need to be clarified
- Analyses being made using the questionnaire survey are making good progress
- The presentation was very good, clear and well structured.
- For the research objectives, the team should write in numbers rather than statement.
- Methodology is not clear on how to collect the data, however after the team presented the appendix A we found that Ghana used questionnaires.
- Appendix A is useful for sharing with other teams to apply to their researches.

Presentation 7: Nagoya University, Japan (in absentia)

Not presented

Presentation 8: Osaka University, Japan (in absentia)

Not presented

3. DAY THREE

Presentation 9: *Decentralization and Quality of School Education in Japan, Tokyo Gakugei University, Japan (in absentia)- presented by Aya Matsunaga*

Notes taken by Jandhyala B G Tilak

Comments from participants

- Findings need to be linked to quality issues
- Be clear on the structure of the presentation, for example, introduction, research rationale, research questions, objectives, methodology, these will be useful for others in group B.

- Be clear on discussion on decentralization policy in schools of Japan
- Need to show evidence to support the findings.
- Need to be clear on literature review on decentralization in Japan that others could compare this concept
- Need to use up-to-date information for reference or supplementing additional information from other studies.

Self-Assessment

Using the form circulated, participating Country team conducted self-assessment and shared their view with other participants. (Assessment Form attached)

Commonalities and emerging issues: Discussion

Joint learning/research

- Meetings/workshops to share knowledge -- mutual/joint learning
- 'Joint research' – cross country with comparability, or joint research on the same country topic? For further consideration in future

Issues of validity/reliability

- Analytical, methodological, statistical (sample)...
 - left to the individual researchers/ teams
- Valid topic for policy relevance so that impact can be expected
- When sample size is small, policy impact can still be expected if “policy” and “impact” are clearly targeted

Quality/quality assurance

- Peer review meetings/workshops – once in a year
- Exchange of research outputs (including in progress) with other country members for comments
- Peer review before final dissemination in any form
- Placement of research output in public domain

Dissemination/Publication/output

- Publication in journals/books
- Submission to international seminars/conferences – also serves as quality control

- A volume – unpublished – electronic or limited photocopy for distribution beyond the network

Toward Solutions and Next step: Discussion

Timeline for completion of research

- 14th Feb for intermediate output (for Yoshida's project)
- Phase II of the AA Dialogue: until March 2012
 - Finalization of the reports by Sept 2011
 - One final peer review meeting/face-to-face or virtual before Sept 2011 (possibly June/July around the next General Assembly?)
 - Submission to the network for further distribution for comments -- June 2011 (feedback within a month)
 - Individual teams may seek comments from any other members of the group
 - This timeline was agreed by Group except Viet Nam due to their own timeline in conflict

Structure of the country submissions for Mid Feb Report

- Structure: may be left to the individuals to decide – considering that the progress of each country team is different
- Content has already been agreed upon: At minimum to include a good research plan, literature review and instruments for data collection.

Discussion on group interaction meeting in March 2011 and way forward to research in each university.

Three countries are to represent Group B for March 16-17 meeting in Tokyo. Their roles are to:

- Explain the status, understanding of key principles and agreements reached to other groups
- Report the progress of research of their own country team
- Discuss emerging issues and next steps with other group representatives
- Report back to all the other Group B members

The countries were selected through voting. The countries selected are: Burkina Faso, Ghana and Malawi.