

A Case Study on Jerudong Primary School Adoption Program

H.M. Sukardi

Abstract: The objectives of this case study were to describe comprehensively how the SEAMEO-VOC TECH Regional Center conducted the school adoption program, to gain information from teachers and related persons on the implementation of the programs, and to identify various interventions for achieving maximum outputs. The study employed a naturalistic qualitative method with Jerudong primary school and the VOC TECH Center as the major sites of the study. Three methods of data collection were enumeration techniques, participant observation and in-depth interview. The findings indicate how beneficial the program was to the school, and the program appears to be suitable to Indonesian schools, whose communities, conditions, and potencies vary.

Keywords: primary school, school adoption program, Voctech Center.

In 1997, the SEAMEO vocational and technical education and training (VOC TECH) Regional Center introduced a new program beside vocational and technical area rendered for community services. The program was called school adoption project (Mardhatilah, 1997). It came up after the 19th high official SEAMEO meeting in which the permanent secretary of education minister was asked to implement the adoption program for a school in Brunei Darussalam.

H.M. Sukardi is a lecturer at the Faculty of Engineering, State University of Yogyakarta.

The SEAMEO-VOCTECH Regional Center has been appointed to realize the school adoption project. Based on several meetings between Ministry of Education and Center Director, Jerudong Primary School was appointed as the school adoption program in Brunei Darussalam for the 1997-1998 fiscal year as the Center's community involvement project to specifically improve the education sector (SEAMEO VOCTECH, 1998).

Jerudong Primary School is located at Jerudong Park area in Brunei Muara District. The school, which offers pre-school and primary (one to six) education and which was established in 1956, had 43 teachers and 600 pupils in 1997. This school is worked-out by the ministry of education as a pilot project for primary education and a show window for modern educational programs and services in Brunei Darussalam.

The aims of the educational programs were to improve the quality of education services and to extend assistance in enhancing human resource capability of the school to be competent in continues improvement and sustainable development. The program was invaluable contribution of the Center to the community as well as to educational development especially on how the various components should be shared together to obtain the best school quality.

An adoption project was initiated when the director of SEAMEO VOCTECH submitted a concept paper as the basis for subsequent discussion and formalized action. The program is a part of a two-year project. The case study was conducted after the one-year adoption program was taken as part of the project development activities.

The framework of the school adoption project can be identified to possess three main components, namely preparation, implementation and evaluation. Each phase of the components consisted of several related activities that were designed to achieve the goals and objectives.

The strategy employed in the school adoption program was partnership or cooperative strategy. Partnership Brown (in Lendrum, 1995), is an association of two or more people as a joint business. Businesses shared in the school adoption project were education programs and activities that would improve the quality of the educational services of the school to be more competent in the following continuous and suitable development.

There are three kinds of approaches on how programs are served by a donor agency to the recipient in the partnership form. These approaches

are top down, bottom up, and eclectic, a combination of the two. In the Jerudong Primary School is adoption project, the eclectic approach was applied to assist the school in improving its services. The VOTTECH team together with the school working committees met periodical to discuss some possible hindrances appearing during the implementation as well as in the future programs. Periodical meetings between the VOTTECH team and the school committees had an important position in supporting the fluency of the school adoption process for both sides. In addition to giving them a chance to arrange the programs based on the school needs, the meetings also provided appropriate assistance suitable to the Center's capabilities.

The success of the programs in the school adoption was affected by three important factors, involving the persons, the beneficial programs and the active participation of the VOTTECH team.

The first factor that affected the program achievement was the involved persons from the school. They were identified as the principal, the vice principals, the schoolteachers, the supporting staff and the pupils. Their roles as the subjects in doing the programs were important. Their active participation really came out when they were involved from the initial step of the plan to the evaluation outputs of the project, so that they felt as an important part of the school program.

Another important factor that also affected the contribution of the teachers in supporting the projects was the benefit of the program itself. Teachers will be more eager to be involved in the programs when the outputs of the program are felt real and can be used for improving their teaching profession. Below are amongst indicators that related to favorable programs the number of participants attending the course, participants' interests following the whole programs, their satisfaction towards the programs and the application of the knowledge and skills for school matters.

The third important determinants that offered major contribution were the participation of the VOTTECH team members. They really were the think-tank of various programs offered within the project. Their contributions varied from direct contribution such as being resource persons, moderators, consultants, to indirect assistance in various activities such as being facilitators and mediators to support the program being implemented.

To maximize the partnership which involves two or more persons Lendrum (1995) suggests several principles to enhance the project outputs, which include: (1) working together to achieve the highest level of acceptable and consistent quality; (2) establishing ways of mutually improving the efficiency of the process and providing quality services; (3) establishing mutual confidence and sharing institutions' goals and plans as they relate; (4) developing new businesses collectively to achieve mutual benefits; (5) fostering mutual trust and amicable working relationship between respective personnels.

The case study on Jerudong Primary School's adoption program had the following four main focuses: (1) how the school adoption project was implemented in the Jerudong Primary School, which is already good in terms of conditions and facilities; (2) what the teachers' perceptions were toward the school adoption program being implemented in their school; (3) what kinds of intervention were implemented by the Center as targets of treatment in the school adoption program; (4) in what areas of education the adoption project obtained its accomplishments.

The general objective of the case study was to describe comprehensively the process of the school adoption program based on the responses, the outputs, and the observable behaviors of the subjects involved. The specific objectives were to describe comprehensively how the Center conducted the school adoption program, to gain information from teachers and related persons about the implementation of the programs, and to identify various interventions and strategies to achieve maximum outputs.

METHOD

The study on Jerudong Primary School's adoption project employed a naturalistic method in which the researchers looked into the events, processes and outcomes within implementation of the projects in a specified environment to build a final report (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Burgess, 1985). The site taken in the investigation was a school case study in which the schoolteachers, programs and people's reactions towards the school adoption project were considered to be an important phenomenon. The important data were collected and then qualitatively analyzed.

The case study on the primary school adoption project took two major places: Jerudong Primary School and SEAMEO VOCTECH Re-

gional Center. The data from the field were collected and administered intensively by using three major activities: saving, retrieving, and correcting data.

The case study of the school adoption programs emphasized the use of qualitative data analyses, which were done mostly by using participant observation. Three techniques were used to collect the data: enumeration, participant-observation and interview.

Once the data were collected, the next step was analyzing them, other important step is using the principle of data reduction, which included the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transferring the raw data. Three techniques were used in the study to get the relevant data: triangulation, weighting the evidence and check-and-recheck.

RESULTS

The center has established the VOTTECH team of Jerudong Primary School's adoption that consisted of staff and specialists and a systematic plan of actions classified into three major components preparatory, implementation and evaluation. The VOTTECH team has several responsibilities to support the achievements of the programs. These responsibilities included ocular visits to the school, conducting needs assessment, formalizing memorandum of understanding, hosting some kinds of training, escorting consultative activities, and facilitating some relevant programs.

In the preparatory component, four major activities were carried out to launch the school adoption project. Several programs were hosted to achieve the set goals and objectives of the school adoption project, which included strategic plans for Jerudong Primary School, computer literacy for schoolteachers, SEAMEO's family night, and training programs.

The VOTTECH team has used several sources of evaluation to its program services. These sources were participants' summative evaluation of every program, feedback from involved persons and annual evaluation conducted during the project. The perceptions of most teachers indicate positive responses toward the school adoption project. According to them, school adoption project benefited for them and for the management of Jerudong Primary School. Training programs and activities undertaken by the center have increased the teachers' knowledge in teaching methodologies and teaching skills.

The school adoption project has created a positive response and a positive impact on the management capability of the school. Four major services have been provided by the Center. These services included: arranging facilitation, providing regular meetings, guiding innovation programs, and assigning suitable resource persons. From the school adoption project, the SEAMEO VOCTECH Center assisted in three areas of school-teachers' problems: attitude area, management area, and training area.

DISCUSSION

The school adoption program was for one year. So far the Center has contributed significantly to the school. Three areas of problems already received priority during the school adoption programs. These problems were teachers' attitudes, school management and training areas for school management benefits.

Several resource persons from other SEAMEO Centers were invited to conduct several training programs so that the programs and services rendered by the Center met the school needs especially on the school-teachers as well as school management. Most of the schoolteachers felt that the programs had benefits for them in enhancing their teaching methods. Because of this, they have asked for the school adoption programs to be lengthened for another year.

Besides some benefits of the programs for the school and the SEAMEO-VOCTECH Center, the case study of the school adoption project has also brought a fresh view to school institutions in Indonesia. A paradigm of adoption program can be applied in various human activities such as in education, trade and business or in industry. For Indonesia, which is now still in the process of reformation and which has various conditions of communities, school adoption paradigm seems very useful to implement in the near future.

One of the values that can be extracted from the adoption paradigm is that the program can be implemented effectively for various school conditions such as modern, moderate or underdeveloped schools in the communities. The most important factor is the spirit of helping each other in the area of education and in the name of the country's benefit so that the whole nation can face the global era competitively in the near future.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The various programs serviced by the SEAMEO VOTTECH Center have achieved the targets and benefited for the school in enhancing teachers' profession and solving existing school problems. The program appears to be suitable to Indonesian schools, whose communities, conditions, and potencies vary.

The school adoption project must be continued. For the second year of the project, the VOTTECH center has to adjust its strategy and implementation based on the Center and the school needs to achieve the best results. The school adoption paradigm is strategic to be applied in school institutions in Indonesia, whose communities, conditions and potencies vary.

REFERENCES

- Burgess, R.G. (Ed.). 1985. *Issues in Educational Research: Qualitative Methods*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Lendrum, T. 1995. *The Strategic Partnering Handbook: A Practical Guides for Managers*. Australia: McGraw-Hill Book Company Australia Limited.
- Mardhatilah, M. 1997. The SEAMEO Community Involvement Project. *SEAMEO Update*, September to October: 8-13.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. 1984. *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Beverly Hills, California: SAGE Publication, INC.
- SEAMEO VOTTECH. 1998. We remember SEAMEO Family Night. *SEAMEO VOTTECH News Letter*. Vol 4 No.1.