

The Road to Success of Naturopathy Curriculum Setting in Thailand: Experience

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Dear editor, a way to promote the classical alternative medicine knowledge is development of updated curriculum for using in present education. In Thailand, there are many alternative medicine systems but naturopathy has just been promoted for a few years. Naturopathy is the important kind of alternative medicine. This is a new thing in some settings such as Thailand. In Thailand, the first curriculum has just been developed for a few years.^[1] The first curriculum was developed at Surin Rajabhat University passing the process of brain storming and public hearing for “sharpening” the curriculum.^[2-3] Here, the author would like to share the experience on setting on the first new curricula on naturopathy in Thailand. The work has just been started at Surin Rajabhat University, Surin Thailand in 2013. At the first step, curriculum development was done. The core concept is based on the pioneer curriculum from USA and the curriculum development was completed in 2015.^[1] To complete the curriculum development, an intensive brain storming meeting was done and the finalized curriculum is derived.^[2] In addition to confirm the acceptability of the curriculum, additional public hearing session was also done.^[3] Of interest, the same way of opinions can be seen from both internal brain storming and external public hearing. The uniqueness of the new developed naturopathy curriculum in Thailand is the integration of the local Thai wisdom, Thai Medicine and Buddhist Medicine into the curriculum.^[3] As noted by Wardle et al., it is hard to control the quality of naturopathy practice in any setting and the development of a good curriculum is a critical point.^[4] A

“uniform standards of education” has to be set.^[5] To set a way to develop a good new curriculum, step by step, the process is described in Table 1. Another important activity to support the new curriculum is setting of the new alternative medicine, naturopathy center. The naturopathy center which will also be used faculty is planned to be set in a specific area of Surin province namely Thungkula. Of interest, this area has its rooted wisdom on Thai Medicine. The coming of the new alternative medicine which the local villagers have never known is a big challenge. It is an interesting question whether the local villagers can accept the new thing that might seem against their rooted beliefs. To assess this issue, the authors visit to the field of Thungkula, in the village with about 200 households, and performed a survey and asked the local villagers about idea about the new naturopathy center. Of interest, after giving information on the concept of naturopathy and new center, no villagers said against the new coming center. In addition, head of the villager also express gladness for coming of the new alternative medicine system center. Indeed, the integration among different alternative systems is mentioned as an important key point for promoting primary health care.^[6] However, a big problem is the little collaboration between naturopathy practitioners and other alternative medicine system practitioners as well as modern medicine practitioners.^[7] A more concerned point is on the acceptance of the system by the local villagers who are the actual clients of the health service. Of interest, it is surprising that naturopathy is the new thing that the local

Table 1. Step by step in success of naturopathy curriculum setting in Thailand

Step	Details
1.Development	This is the process for gathering of the “local knowledge on naturopathy”. The models from other countries are used as core for development of the new curriculum.
2.Brain storming	Brain storming is done to make a criticizing on the developed curriculum. This is the process as “sharpening of the knife”.
3.Public hearing	This is “external hearing” adding to “internal hearing”. Acceptability from the external view is verified.

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villagers have never known they express positive attitude to the system. In fact, any alternative medicine systems usually share the common concept in management of the patients and this might be the explanation. In addition, the local Thai Medicine system usually links to the “nature”, hence, it might be simply mixed with the new coming naturopathy. The authors hoped that this described model can be useful for other settings in developing of the new alternative medicine curriculum.

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