

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

Technical college is one of the educational institutions at vocational education level, which aims to develop human beings to have knowledge and ability in some occupational fields. In addition, the vocational education is not only a foundation/base for developing to higher educational management but also is a part in the group of eight occupational fields which can be important part of free movement of labour in Thailand's entering into ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. Today, there is no model of evaluation to measure whether the technical colleges in Thailand are ready for entering this ASEAN Economic Community. This measurement include in what level and how much addition of preparedness these colleges have to develop themselves. This research aims to study a Model of Evaluation on the readiness of technical colleges for joining the ASEAN Community. This study and its results used for redirecting the existing policy and becoming the guideline for preparing the readiness of the Technical Colleges for entering ASEAN Community. In this chapter, the researcher will present the background that leads to the importance of questions, research questions, research objectives, areas of study, definitions, and benefits gained from the research. The details are giving as the followings.

### **1.1 Background and importance of problems**

At present, many organisations both from governmental and private sectors must urgently prepare for entering ASEAN Community because the time for Thailand and others for joining the ASEAN Community is coming very soon. ASEAN was established on 8 August in 1967 by five founding countries, which were Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Eventually there were more members and to date ASEAN is a 10-country association. The target of ASEAN is to promote cooperation on politics, social-economic, peace and order of the Region, cooperation among ASEAN countries and international cooperation among

organizational group, including the domestic and oversea cooperation groups (Department of ASEAN Affairs, 2557 <http://www.mfa.go.th/asean/contents/files/other-20121128-163749-350622.pdf>). Because during the last few periods there has been high competition on several aspects in the Region that is increasingly dangerous for all, the member countries therefore signed their names to announce the establishment of ASEAN Community ( ASEAN-Community) (Bali Concord II). Within the year, 2017 there is the consent that supports the gathering and cooperating among ASEAN members in holistic way. There are three pillars of ASEAN, which are composed of ASEAN Political-Security Community or APSC, ASEAN Economic Community or AEC, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community or ASCC). The country leaders all agreed that they should accelerate the gathering as soon as possible within 2015 (Department of ASEAN Affairs <http://www.mfa.go.th/asean/contents/files/other-20140102-103348-182352.pdf>, 2557) after the establishment of the ASEAN-Community and creation the cooperation on three pillars of ASEAN Community. One of the pillars that are important in creating cooperation is the ASEAN Socio Cultural Community or ASCC that includes education. ASEAN members held the meeting regarding education for the first time in October 1975 in ASEAN Permanent Committee on Socio-Cultural Activities, and afterward there was continuous follow-up meetings by the Ministries of Education who are representative of the countries who participate in Meetings. In year 2013 in the conference of the Ministers on the ASEAN Education (the Fourth Meeting in Phuket) there is the identification of targets in order to step forward to social communities and ASEAN cultures on educational management. It is composed of arranging education truly with quality, promoting ASEAN scholarship and educational network, promoting good understanding among countries in ASEAN group, and developing the usage among ASEAN members which is composed of 10 countries ( Office of International Relations, <http://www.bic.moe.go.th/th/images/stories/ASEAN/articles/ed-asean1.pdf>, 2013). For the pillar of ASEAN Economic Community or AEC, the Thai education system plays roles in arranging the integrated plan in order to make the framework for developing skills through making ASEAN benchmarking and transferring of credits. It emphasises that the training institute or vocational education would promote the potential development in the Region. This development includes promotion and the transfer of students among ASEAN countries including

transfer of skilled labour with quality in the Region, establishment of the Information Technology Network in ASEAN for human resources, and development of the occupational standards that emphasise the human potential in ASEAN countries. The objective is to promote the human resources to have potential at the regional and the global levels. This includes responses to the need of the industrial sectors (Office of the Education Council, 2011: 12).

It is clear that ASEAN cooperation on education is a part of establishing ASEAN Community that aims to enhance the life standard levels of the people and develop the region sustainably with the focus on people-centred development. Thailand expects some benefits from the framework of cooperation within ASEAN, which is the assistance on academic and technical under several projects including identifying the policies that rely on reinforcement together under the ASEAN Framework. Besides, it is also a good chance to create potential of the country and the opportunity to have rights in pushing the policy of the countries onto the international level. This means the chance to preserve the benefits of Thailand at the international level regarding the cooperation between Thailand and others in education and setting it in same direction that responds to the guideline for educational reform of the ASEAN member countries. Especially on the extension of education, enhancement of the educational quality, building of the basic structure of infrastructures, facilities and technologies in communication to receive the extended opportunity, and enhancement of educational quality levels.

The direction of Thai education on the ASEAN stage demands adjustment from all participants or stakeholders in all sectors to be ready for the changes. The students must pay attention and be aware of the new outcomes or consequences that may come from the gathering of the countries into ASEAN Community. The establishment of ASEAN Community, which is new era of society, will reflect more on the multicultural societies and the readjustment/reorientation on the learning process and attitude. The process of learning in the new era should aim for the target, awareness to the current situation, creation of abilities to work with others who have diversified cultures, learning about neighbouring countries in terms of history and culture, and improvement in English competency/skills (Pasakorn Urasang, 2012). According to Dr. Sompop Manarungsan (2014; cited from Banyat Kamnunwat, 2014) Dean of Panyapiwat

Institute of Management ( PIM), who showed opinion on the direction of Thai education in ASEAN, in year 2015 there will be heavier investment on education, public health, morality, ethics, and development of life quality. These experts think that the education must develop three parts such as

(1) The adjustment in Thailand educational curriculum to fit it in the ASEAN Community and to emphasise the curriculum of social science and language groups.

(2) The racial diversification of educational personnel who are teachers, instructors, and knowledge providers diversified to transfer cultures of each country to the youth.

(3) The development of educational institutes in the hardware system, software and

readiness to create learners into able persons who can work. As a part of vocational education, Anand Ngamsa-ard (2012) (one of the committee members who make the drafted strategy of vocational education to ASEAN) stated about the guideline for preparing the readiness.

It should aim to administer the vocational schools at the vocational educational level as the followings. educational management and training on occupation in order to produce and develop human resources to become competent in their occupation and can step smoothly into ASEAN Community in year 2015. This development is composed of

(1) The development on the use of language for communication and the use of information technology and having the desirable characters for entering ASEAN Community.

(2) The development of the system on cooperation network on instructional management in international vocational education at ASEAN level and in the region.

(3) The arrangement of the vocational educational and training on the occupation to build capability responsive to occupation fields that respond to the needs and the standard of ASEAN Community.

(4) The promotion of the learning on religion, arts, and cultural exchange in ASEAN.

In addition, there is also identification of purposes that can be summarised into the followings:

- (1) Preparation of the instruction in foreign languages.
- (2) Creation of the learners to have desirable characters and creation of the international curriculum that can link with other countries in ASEAN.
- (3) Arrangement of the meetings or academic seminars to exchange knowledge in vocational education management among teachers and administrators.

Additional activities can be done in

- (1) Arrangement of study tours in ASEAN and in the Region.
- (2) Production of manuals, textbooks, and extracurricular readings in English language to promote the activities arrangement for the instruction in several forms.
- (3) Creation of the network among students in the school and those in the international level on the development of research, innovation and invention and information technology.
- (4) Exchange of information among the groups of vocational education institutes in ASEAN. The educational management that aims to extend the opportunities on vocational education system truly and equally for all target groups and to create motivation for the schools to be determined and willing to develop themselves in all dimensions.

The educational management in vocational education level is the educational processes to produce and develop human labour on occupation fields at the skill level, technique level and technology level. According to the statement of Article 1 Section 6 (National Education Act) about the vocational education management, the training of occupation must be educational arrangement on occupation fields that responses to the national social economic development plan and National Educational Act to produce and develop human resources in occupational fields in the skill, technique, and technology levels. This includes the enhancement of the occupational. Education in higher fields to be responsive to the needs of the labour markets and the use of knowledge in terms of theories and Thai indigenous knowledge to develop the learners

to have knowledge, abilities, work skills, and abilities to perform their occupation in term of practitioners or freelance practitioners (Vocational Education Act, 2008).

The study on the guidelines for producing labour force on vocational education and technology for the need of the country (“the Case Study on the Types of Industry under Office of the Education Council, Ministry of Education”) (2009). Knowing in the seminars to make plan for Educational Management to produce human force according to the need to the country (referred to the workshop for planning), shows that there is still a large need for labour force in industrial sectors. These sectors need people in moderate level and in operational level with skills and good capabilities. The evaluation result of the Office of ONESQA (Office of National Evaluation Standard Quality Assurance) reconfirms that the graduates in the level of vocational certificate do not enter smoothly into the labour markets. They usually aim to continue study at higher level on continue study in bachelor degree levels in other fields that are simpler and responsive to their personal interests. This trend deprives the industry from labour forces with skills and therefore the competition over skilled labour forces grows tighter. According to the report of educational research on the guideline for production of labour forces on vocational education and technology to the need of the country (the Case Study of Instructional Type), this phenomenon is obviously not consistent with the Guideline stated in Section 6 of the Decree/Act. The vocational education is the target of improvement in the vocational education management that its management and the vocational training must respond to the national social economic and development plan and National Education Act plan. The development of labour force in occupational fields in skilled level, technique level, and technology levels as well as the enhancement of the vocational education level must respond to the needs of labour markets. The system can apply the knowledge in terms of international theory and the Thai indigenous knowledge to develop the learners to be knowledgeable and able to work at high level of competency. These labour forces thus are capable to perform work as either practitioners or freelance practitioners (Vocational Education Act, 2008).

The situation and the problems on labour force development as the whole picture of the country in terms of the needs of labour forces reveal that the structure of hiring labour in the country still relies mostly on those in low level (blue collar) than those in higher level (around only 10 percent). It differs from the labour forces in moderate level

and low levels that are still need to fill around 90 per cent labour markets needs. The industrial groups need human labour in moderate level especially those who finish vocational certificates and high vocational certificates more than graduates from bachelor degrees do. However, around 60 per cent of the students who finish vocational and high vocational certificates do not enter labour markets but instead continue study in higher level in other fields irrelevant to the majors they finished in vocational certificate level. On the contrary, most of the graduates of bachelor degree levels enter the labour markets and face problems. The demand for more practically skillful labour force is too high or thus the numbers of unemployed among the graduates of bachelor degrees are growing. The problem includes the hired-in labourers who have the educational degrees or lower and their works are not consistent with their background. Such problems create further problems in production of competent labour forces. Most of the schools will produce labour force according their institutional abilities in educational level. The tendency of producing graduates in the levels that are lower than bachelor degree reduces. Therefore, the number of bachelor degree and higher degree holders is increase. Included in this tendency is the production of labour force in bachelor degree levels in areas of social sciences or humanities beyond the needed size. The labour forces that finish in sciences, technology, and health sciences are produced fewer than the necessary size. Obviously, the practices and guidelines for educational practices are not consistent to one another (Office of the Education Council, 2011: 13). In addition, Office of the Education Council that conducted research on the strategy of developing educational quality has identified the problems on vocational education management that the educational management in vocational education level does not emphasize on the practical skills, the competency/ capability on occupational fields, and the strong linkages to the manufacturers or employers as much as they should. The vocational institutions produce graduates with less capabilities/competency or inconsistent skills with the needs of the end-users including lack of foundation or necessary basic knowledge (Office of the Education Council, 2008: 34).

The research on the strategy of educational quality development (National Agenda from 2008-2012, Office of the Education Council, 2008) stated that the graduates of vocational education and higher vocational education are working well to the satisfaction of their employers, and more than 90 per cent of them can get work around

a year after study completion. The follow-up and evaluation of educational management and the brainstorming regarding the crises of quality in the vocational education under the Office of the Educational Council reveal that the government and private sectors develop the vocational education in response to the need for developing the countries. However, there are still problems that the learners and the graduates of vocational educational have the capabilities that are not consistent with the needs of the end-users. These graduates also lack of necessary basic skills or knowledge, which are the communication skills in Thai and English, knowledge on information technology, ability for critical thinking, skill to solve problems, and abilities in creative thinking. Besides, the main problems in producing labour force in vocational educational level is lacking direction and targets for developing labour forces as the whole picture of the country. The schools just arrange education according to the readiness of each school that is actually not consistent to the real needs of labour force in the country and in the industry sectors. The educational management in vocational education does not emphasise on the practical trainings, train competencies in occupational fields, and suffer poor linkage with the manufacturers as much as it should be. The graduates from the vocational education lack knowledge and necessary skills that response to the need of the manufacturers including lacking of making linkage in educational management in basic education level and vocational education. As a result, nobody is interested deeply in study as much as it should be and many suffer from lack of publication of the progress on occupation and guidelines for performing occupation and the income in the future.

Upon consideration on the quality of the students who completed the education in vocational education level, the evaluation on the situation on the production of labour force has identified the lack of quality among the produced labour force in terms of knowledge and necessary skills. These lacking skills cover the skill of communication in both Thai and foreign languages, the use of computers and IT knowledge, knowledge on management, knowledge on applying figures/numbers, and the skill for basic calculation. They also show insufficient skills in other characters or qualification such as critical thinking systematically, solving problems in work, working in team, sense of responsibilities, honesty, patience, diligence, discipline, punctuality, and leadership. In addition, the persons or new graduates cannot perform the work immediately after

graduation; they must get training on the skills of the qualification that response to the work required by manufacturers for at least 3 to 6 months, which make manufacturers must waste more time and expenses (Office of the Education Council, 2011).

From statements above, it is clear that the students who completed the vocational education level are not ready and have no quality after the completion of education before entering the labour markets. Some secondary data studies revealed that the readiness of the technical colleges is still in a moderate level. Most of instructors and students think that they are not well publicized and trained, and the administrators do not create awareness for them in preparation for joining the ASEAN Community. They are just enquired to prepare on the English language and perceive only on the concrete form and identify that in entering the ASEAN Community the Technical Colleges must prepare the language used first (Yuthasin Chumanee, 2011). This is consistent with Kriengsak Chareonwongsak (2013: cited from Apichart Srisa-art and Patcharee Samrongyen: 265) who stated that Thai society members still lack of awareness on entering ASEAN Community, lack of awareness of the importance, impact and the necessity in preparing the readiness to deal with big manufacturers or productive organizations that run the international business. Lack of awareness can create problem for Thai manufacturers who need more awareness of knowledge and understanding in the use of benefits from ASEAN Community. The opportunity to join ASEAN Community is there but they cannot adjust themselves to respond to the consequences in the future. Besides, they show low skill in English language and limited knowledge and understanding about neighbouring countries in ASEAN society. The Thai educational system therefore lacks alternatives in learning language, cultures, and economics of neighbouring countries.

From the statements above, it is clear that the preparation for joining the ASEAN Community is very important. The problems, however, appear in the low quality of the learners. The lack of reliability or the quality of learners to join the labour markets, the reduced chances to successful entrance into the vocational field, the lack of labour quality in the knowledge and ability in various aspects, and the poor preparation for readiness of Technical Colleges to develop themselves and learners to be ready for ASEAN Community. The researcher is therefore interested in studying the development of a model to evaluate the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN

Community. The object of research is to analyse the components and indicators the evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community including creating the system or model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community and to find efficiency of the model for evaluating this readiness. It is emphasising on finding of indicators of Technical Colleges' readiness for joining the ASEAN Community through synthesis of documents, research, and interviews as well as analysing possible components and surveys. Surveys would confirm whether those components are important and necessary for the readiness for joining the ASEAN Community and would allow creation of an evaluation model and manual for using the model to evaluate the readiness and to measure the quality of the model. Besides, this study also creates an evaluation program that is convenient and easy to use. Results from the research conducted to collect indicators and components for evaluation of the Technical Colleges' readiness for joining the ASEAN Community may produce a model for indicators and components to use and to produce a computerised program to be used in evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community. Administrators of Technical Colleges gain a model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community. The said model could be a guideline for Office of the Vocational Education Commission that subsequently could bring the model for evaluation of the readiness of Technical Colleges in the whole country. Eventually results of the evaluation are maybe useful to produce plans for developing Technical Colleges further generally.

## **1.2 Research questions**

1.2.1 The components and indicators for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges for entering ASEAN Community should be set down as some forms of components and indicators. What are the components and indicators for such evaluation?

1.2.2 What should be the model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community? What is the quality of such model?

1.2.3 When testing the model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community, what are the results?

### **1.3 Research objectives**

1.3.1 To analyse components and indicators to evaluate the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community;

1.3.2 To construct a model and seek for the quality of the model for evaluating the readiness of Technical College in entering ASEAN Community;

1.3.3 To study the results of evaluation on the readiness of Technical College in entering ASEAN Community.

### **1.4. Limitation of research**

#### **1.4.1 Areas of population**

The population of this research is composed of administrators of the Technical Colleges, the Heads of Educational Quality Assurance and the Instructors in the Technical Colleges from 110 colleges; these Colleges have around 12,352 staff (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2012).

#### **1.4.2 Contents area**

The contents areas of this research aim to study the followings.

1.4.2.1 The components and indicators for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community are relying on the principle of system, which are input factors, process, and production. The researcher synthesizes secondary data and interview results to construct indicators to measure for the quality of indicators to evaluate the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community. The components and indicators considered through tests on Content Validity, Construct Validity, and analysis of surveyed components to construct the components on readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community.

1.4.2.2 Construction of the model. Construction of the model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community covers five issues, which are

- (1) Target of evaluation.
- (2) Areas of evaluation.
- (3) Implementation of evaluation (composed of the qualification of evaluators, tools for evaluation and the methods of evaluation).
- (4) The judgment of evaluation results (composed of evaluation criteria and the evaluation program).
- (5) The report of the results of the evaluation into use. The detail is showing in each item coming from the indicators in Step 1 (gathering the indicators to mix with data of participants).

There are should be any guideline for evaluation that is appropriate to the context of Technical Colleges and accurate for quality of models for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community. It would shown, tested through consideration of four standards. These standards are

- (1) Standard on utility.
- (2) Standard on feasibility.
- (3) Standard on propriety.
- (4) Standard on accuracy.

1.4.2.3 The trial of evaluation of College readiness for entering ASEAN Community. The research evaluates the model for evaluation of the readiness that are composed of five issues.

- (1) Target of evaluation.
- (2) Area of evaluation.
- (3) Implementation of evaluation (composed of the qualification of evaluator, tools for evaluation and evaluation methods).
- (4) The judgment of evaluation results (composed of evaluation of criteria and evaluation program).
- (5) The report of results and application of results to use in three components of evaluation (readiness on academic aspects, on language and technologies, and on society and culture).

There is processing of evaluation results to present to Technical Colleges and to evaluate the quality of the model by considering four standards, which are standard of utility, of feasibility, of propriety, of accuracy.

#### 1.4.3 Limitation of time

This research was do between 2013 and 2015.

### 1.5. Definitions of terms

The model for evaluating the readiness of Technical College for joining the ASEAN Community means the structure that is the process about implementing the evaluation of readiness in entering ASEAN Community. It is composed of target of evaluation, things to evaluate, objectives of evaluation, indicators, components for evaluation, the methods of evaluation, the evaluation manual and evaluation program on the readiness.

Technical Colleges means the institutions that are opening the curriculum of vocational education under Office of the Vocation Education, Ministry of Education.

Readiness means abilities of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community in several aspects such as on academic aspects, on language and technology, and on society and culture.

ASEAN Community means the group of 10 countries composed of Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Brunei Darussalam in order to cooperate in commerce, society, economic, culture and security of the group through three main pillars: ASEAN Political and Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community, and ASEAN Social and Culture Community. It creates one vision, identity, and community.

The programme for evaluating the readiness means the set of commands for computers in the operation system by using the language in writing in the PHP Programme in the set of order to facilitate the evaluation on the readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community. Call it “R-ASEAN Programme” which can run the evaluation of the implementation and the processing of evaluation results automatically and can calculate and interpret the results in three levels of readiness.

The quality of model for evaluating the readiness means the appropriateness of the model that operated in response to the need of the users, to update information in timely fashion, to have feasibility appropriate to the situation, and to accept by users. It is economical, worthy, well tested in operation, appropriate, and accurate.

Accuracy means the evaluation model that utilises the techniques and methods that can provide data, information, and evaluation of data correctly. It can classify the level of Technical Colleges' readiness clearly. The evaluation results have validity and reliability, and it can draw conclusions from evaluation results reasonably.

Feasibility means the model of evaluation that can be implemented and responsive to the context of Technical colleges, and its evaluation results are acceptable at both the policy level and operational level.

Propriety means the model of evaluation that is consistent with the condition and context of the Technical Colleges. The evaluation results are acceptable by relevant stakeholders.

Utilities means the model of evaluation that can provide data that responds to the needs of the users. The evaluation results are truly useful for the relevant stakeholders. It creates benefits for development of Technical Colleges. The reports of evaluation results and the publication are timely prepared in the period that can bring the results to use.

Indicators of readiness mean the variables that are observable during the implementation or the practice of the Technical Colleges. It is showing the levels of readiness of Technical Colleges for entering ASEAN Community. Components of readiness for joining the ASEAN Community means the groups of variables that can measure the levels of readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community through information on the implementation and practices.

## **1.6. Benefits expected from research**

1.6.1 Research can get indicators and components for evaluating readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community.

1.6.2 Research gets the model for applying indicators and components to use for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community.

1.6.3 Research measures the efficiency of indicators and components for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges for joining the ASEAN Community.

1.6.4 Research gets a computerised programme for evaluating the levels of readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community.

1.6.5 Research gets a guideline for developing the quality of the Technical Colleges on several aspects for entering ASEAN Community.

1.6.6 The administrators of technical college get the model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges to use in evaluating Technical Colleges to prepare their readiness in entering ASEAN Community.

1.6.7 Technical Colleges will have the plan for guideline for developing the skills of the instructors and the learners on several aspects such as on language, technology, and understanding on the multicultural practices.

1.6.8 Office of the Vocation Education will bring the evaluation model to use in evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in the whole country and to draw conclusion of the evaluation results, which leads to making general development plan for Technical Colleges as the whole further.

1.6.9 The Ministry of Education can apply the guideline for developing the evaluation model for evaluating the readiness of Technical Colleges in entering ASEAN Community in the educational institutes at several levels appropriately.

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