

Full Length Research Paper

Development of a learning model for enhancing social skills on elementary students

Rattanaporn Traisor^{*}, Wimonrat Soonthornrojana and Jiraporn Chano

Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, Mahasarakham, Thailand.

Received 24 March, 2015; Accepted 6 July, 2015

The goals of this study were: 1) to study the situation, problems and needs for a learning model to enhance the social skills of sixth grade students; 2) to develop a learning model that would address those needs; 3) to study the effectiveness of that learning model; 4) to compare performance on pretests and posttests of social skills; and 5) to inquire of the opinions of students and teachers on the resulting learning model. The samples were 146 teachers in the development phase, and 18 teachers and 364 students in 18 different sixth grade classrooms in the implementation phase. Schools represented three different sizes. Data analysis was done with mean, percentage, standard deviation and dependent sample t-test. The research findings showed that teachers teaching in grade sixth need the proposed learning model, consisting of six components and six learning stages, to enhance social skills ranking. Its significance includes: the development of interpersonal relationship and communications skills, decision making and problem solving skills, and coping with emotional and stress skills. Its effectiveness was higher than the specified criterion. The experimental students' post-test scores were significantly higher than the pretest by .05. The pretest/posttest mean scores were 54.86/70.94 for small schools, 58.54/70.82 for medium schools, and 54.17/67.90 for large schools. The students and teachers' opinion on learning model, in overall, was in "High" level.

Key words: Interpersonal relationship and communication skills, decision making and problem solving skills, coping with emotion and stress skills.

INTRODUCTION

Social skills are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language and our personal appearance. Human beings are sociable creatures and have developed many ways to communicate messages, thoughts and feelings with others (Skills You Need, 2013). In this study, the social skills as components of life skills in general were studied. The World Health

Organization (1997) defined the importance of social skills for adjusting and maintaining good conduct which would help people to cope appropriately with their expected needs as well as different challenges that occur in daily life. This was relevant to the creation of Thailand's Core Curriculum of Basic Education 2008, in which life skills were determined as one of the major competencies for students, covering knowledge, feeling

^{*}Corresponding author. E-mail: rattanaporn2517@gmail.com. Tel: +66 (1) 0645557.

Table 1. The situation of children and youths during 2010-2011.

Order	Children and youths' situation	Percent
1	Usually accessed Face book, Twitter, or other online social networks	48.0
2	Usually played online or computer games	43.7
3	Did not live with their parents	35.3
4	Occasionally and usually watched pornography	31.6
5	Occasionally and usually drank whisky, beer, and wine	31.1
6	Occasionally and usually smoked cigarettes	19.6

and thoughts, interpersonal relationships, adequately solving conflicts, adjustment to keep pace with social as well as environmental changes, avoidance of inappropriate behaviors that would affect both themselves and others, self-defense in critical situations and life management that is congruent with their society and culture. Four components of major life skills for creating and developing immunity for children and youths in contemporary social situations were determined, and included the following: 1) awareness of self and others, and finding value in both; 2) analytical thinking as well as decision making, and creative problem solving; 3) emotional and stress management; and 4) good interpersonal relationships (The Office of Basic Education Commission, 2011). These four are intended to cover the life skills in both psychomotor and social domains.

The Thai family has been transformed by the rapid and complicated changes in economy and society. The traditional Thai family structure was the "extended family," which means that at least three generations would live together in the same house. Extended Thai families commonly included grandparents, parents, aunts or uncles, and children and cousins. All the family members worked toward common goals such as raising and morally guiding the children and keeping up with the household duties. However, the Thai family structure currently tends to accept the models of the "nuclear" or "Single Parent" families, in which a household consists of a couple or a single divorced parent living with their children. In a society dominated by single parent families, as parents work outside rather than do household duties, their children are raised or taken care of by grandparents, babysitters, or day nurseries. A series of consequent problems caused by this situation was found by a child watch survey of Ramajitti Institute. The survey sampled an area of 17 provinces, with a minimum sample size of 1,000 people in each province, with a total of 18,269 children and youth (Ramajitti Institute, 2012). The details are shown in Table 1.

Nowadays, there are concerns that these situations are bringing risks that can result in more violence that is more widespread, and Thai children are vulnerable to dangers of a problematic social structure, of which the above

problems are symptomatic.

Due to the above social problems, all sectors of the society have to collaborate in preventing and solving the problems. The easiest way in doing this is to train the children and youths in appropriate "social skills," so that they would be able to adjust themselves and behave in appropriate ways to face the different challenges in daily life effectively. Specifically, sixth grade students are at the early stages of adolescence, an age when they face physical, emotional, and social changes. Children who are confused in early adolescence would encounter emotional stress, which leads to undesirable and problematic behaviors. (Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development, 2000)

Various research studies have been conducted on the teaching of social skills. Arslan (2011) found that the mean scores of positive social skills based on perfectionism levels did not significantly vary. In addition, it was found that the mean scores of negative social behaviors of children with high perfectionism levels varied significantly. Furthermore, the mean scores of social behavior of children with higher rather than lower levels of perfectionism were themselves higher. Deniz (2013) found that there was a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and problem solving. Poomkaew (2012) developed a life skills curriculum, and found that the posttest scores were significantly higher than the pretest. Kantajon (2010) found that there were significant differences in social skills scores between children attending training sessions of different duration and who experienced different child rearing practices. Additionally, their posttest scores were significantly higher than the pretest. This study was to develop a learning model for enhancing six aspects of social skills in grade sixth students in order to prevent six kinds of problem including the substance addiction, alcohol drinking, quarrelling, internet danger, smoking, and inappropriate sexual behavior by using three pairs of social skills: interpersonal relationships and communications, decision-making skills and problem-solving skills, and coping with emotional skills and coping with stress skills. The goal was to provide them with immunity when they graduated from school and entered into their daily life.

Research aims

- 1) To study the social situations that may be a problem and define the needs for a learning model that could enhance grade sixth students' social skills in dealing with the consequences of these social behaviors.
- 2) To develop a learning model that would address the needs as defined above to enhance grade sixth students' social skills.
- 3) To study the effectiveness of the above learning model.
- 4) To assess the impact of the learning model by comparing pretest and posttest scores on a pre-designated assessment of social skills.
- 5) To inquire of the opinions of students and teachers on the resulting learning model.

METHODOLOGY

The development of the learning model in this research proceeded according to four phases.

Phase 1: preliminary survey

A preliminary survey of problems and needs for a learning model to enhance social skills of sixth grade students, was conducted by asking the teachers' opinion through a questionnaire.

Phase 2: construction of a tentative model

A learning model was constructed based on responses to the questionnaire during this phase. The researcher synthesized questionnaire results with a literature survey that included related literature, documents, concepts and theories from the field, and interviews with specialists. These interviews from the specialists were used to refine the tentative model. Lesson plans were constructed and the model was tried out.

Phase 3: implementation of the model

The developed model was used with a sample of 18 teachers teaching 364 students. The researcher trained each teacher how to use the learning model, and they taught from the model for 20 weeks.

Phase 4: evaluation of the model

The model was evaluated by investigating the students and teachers' opinion on the learning model by using the questionnaire.

Samples

Two samples were selected for two parts of the research. First, a sample of 146 teachers of the Buriram Elementary Educational Service Area Office Four was sent the questionnaire chosen by simple random sampling. From these teachers, a smaller sample of 18 teachers selected by multi - stage sampling was assigned to be part of the experimental group. These 18 teachers taught sixth

grade students from 18 classrooms, making a total of 364 students. They were in the second semester of the academic year 2012 in various schools in the Buriram Elementary Educational Service Area Office Four in Buriram province, Thailand.

Research instruments

Phase 1: Preliminary Survey

A questionnaire was designed by the researcher, and evaluated by five experts. The IOC values ranged from 0.60-1.00. It was used to ask the teachers about problem situations they thought might be issues with their sixth grade students. The questionnaire included 13 items from a checklist (more than one alternative could be selected), and the choices were then ranked. Additionally, they were asked for their ideas about designing the content and learning activities, and determine the duration for instructional management in each aspect based on their relative significance by the teachers.

Phase 2: Construction of a tentative model

Structured interviews were held with experts in order to develop the model and lesson plans based on learning model. They were asked about performance in the social skills, components of a working learning model, and techniques for developing the lesson plan and learning activities for enhancing each aspect of social skills. They identified three pairs of social skills to be taught together. These included the development of interpersonal skills and communication skills, decision-making skills and problem-solving skills, and emotional management skills and syntax. They were then asked to evaluate the learning model. The evaluative findings were overall at a "High" level of propriety, the mean value = 4.2.

The learning model for enhancing the sixth grade students' social skills consisted of six components: 1) foundation approach and theory; 2) objectives; 3) learning steps (syntax); 4) social system; 5) principle of reaction; and 6) support system. The third component, syntax, consisted of six steps as follows:

- a) Building awareness (B). This is the process in providing activities for students' awareness and their view of the significance of problems facing adolescents at hand which may have affected them and others. In this way, students would view the importance of activities to be performed further by using the social modeling to encourage them to see the significance of themselves and others.
- b) Enhancing the experience (E). This is the process of reviewing the students' former experience in those situations, and increasing their skills with new experiences in order to stimulate the students' behavior for problem solving based on specified situations.
- c) Exchange (E). In this process students learn negotiation, sharing, and presenting various techniques in order to expand the range of solutions of their group. Then, they can practice their social skills in those issues through the conclusions that their small group arrives at using various methods.
- d) Presentation (P). Groups gave presentations about their performances, from brainstorming, sharing, and analytical thinking, and in many forms such as role playing, exhibition, report, or visual displays such as bulletin boards.
- e) Concept conclusion (C). This was the collaboration by the teacher and students in concluding their work, based on the group presentation, worksheets and knowledge they gained in thinking and concluding for more understanding.
- f) Application (A). Here, the students applied their approach from learning in order to adjust to the changed situations by repeated

Table 2. Learning activities and teaching schedule.

Expected behavior	Activity No/Title	Duration (20 h)
Unit 1: Speaking sweetly and being charming.		8
1. Be able to behave acceptably, and greet by using polite speech or nonverbal language.	1. When good thinking happens, good speech follows.	2
2. Be able to use speech and nonverbal language to express ones' feeling and thoughts appropriately in different situations as well as perceive the feelings and thoughts of others.	2. Be friendly by friendship. 3. Speak to express one's feelings and thoughts. 4. Do not violate the other person's rights.	4
3. Be able to refuse, negotiate, and ask for help in risky situation.	5. Criticize one's friend. 6. Creative critiquing. 7. Know how to refuse. 8. Determine another's refusal.	2
Unit 2: Decision making and problem solving.		7
1. Be able to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative, and make decisions in selecting the better alternative given the situation.	9. When one has to make decisions. 10. How to judge risky situations.	2
2. Be able to solve a problem systematically from perception, finding the cause, planning for problem solving, and solving the problem appropriately.	11. Narcotic drug problem. 12. Problems from online Internet. 13. Liquor and tobacco	3
3. Be able to select a problem solving method that is worthwhile, flexible, and which would lead to usefulness for every situation.	14. Conscious Problem Solving 1. 15. Conscious Problem Solving 2.	2
Unit 3, Good emotions, being happy.		5
1. Be able to evaluate and know the emotions of oneself and others.	16. What emotion are you feeling today?	1
2. Be able to control emotions and select how to manage them effectively and appropriately.	17. Know how to manage one's emotion. 18. Practice how to control one's emotion.	2
3. Be able to know the cause and technique for alleviating one's stress and inappropriate behavior in an appropriate way.	19. To know about stress. 20. To know how to reduce one's stress.	2

practice as well as applying their learning in similar situations.

The learning model was structured into a series of learning units teaching social skills which had been ranked into 20 plans by the teachers as shown in Table 2.

The pretest and posttest of social skills consisted of three situational alternatives inventory of 40 items. Each item was weighted, with the score measured in three levels (2, 1, and 0). The item discrimination values of each item were higher than the critical value. Using the correlation coefficient between each item and total score called item total correlation, the reliability of item total was 0.865.

Phase 3: Implementation of the model

The final version of the lesson plans was presented to a sample of 18 teachers to implement this model in their classrooms in order to find the effectiveness of the learning model. Implementation began with a pretest of social skills, 20 hours of instruction, and the posttest.

Phase 4: Evaluation of the model

Students were given a questionnaire on their opinions of the instruction they received. Their responses were classified into two parts. Part 1 included 15 items scored according to a 4-point Likert scale, with ratings of highest, high, low, and lowest. Part 2 consisted of open-ended written critiques and recommendations. The prompts were questions about the propriety of the learning management process, the supplementary documents they received, and the general atmosphere they felt for being selected. The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher and validated by seven experts, who rated its content validity. The mean value of propriety was = 4.26 which was in "High" level.

Another questionnaire was administered to participating teachers asking for their opinions. This too was classified into two parts. Part 1 consisted of twelve questions scored according to a 4-point Likert scale, with ratings of highest, high, low, and lowest. Questions covered all six aspects of the model, including overall propriety.

Part 2 consisted of open-ended responses to requests for critiques and other recommendations. It too was constructed by the researcher and validated by 7 experts to investigate its content

Table 3. Problems and needs based on teachers’ opinion on the learning model for enhancing social skills.

Children’s and youths’ problems that should be added for learning activity management		No of informants	%
1	Narcotic taking	115	78.77
2	Alcohol drinking	111	76.03
3	Quarrelling (violence, aggression, offence)	110	75.34
4	Cyber dangers (chatting and playing games)	105	71.92
5	Smoking	100	68.49
6	Pornographic materials (video clips, comics, VCDs)	92	63.01
7	Sexual misconduct	89	60.96
8	Hanging out with friends (assembling for unlawful purposes, racing motorcycles)	86	58.90
9	Imitation	77	52.74
10	Gambling	68	46.58
11	Materialism (extravagant lifestyle)	61	41.78
12	Nightlife	37	25.34
13	Stress (sadness, suicidal attempt)	20	13.70
Social skills to be enhanced		Priority (Percentage)	
		1	2
		3	
	1. Interpersonal relationship and communication skills	41.10	27.39
	2. Decision making and problem solving skills	36.30	39.73
	3. Coping with emotion and stress skills	22.60	32.88
		44.52	

validity. The mean value of propriety was = 4.25 which was in “High” level.

Data analysis

Results from the questionnaires were analyzed for frequency, mean, percent, and standard deviation. In-depth interviews were analyzed by transcribing the audio recordings and coming to interpretations and conclusions. Finally, pretest and posttest scores were analyzed using a dependent t-test in order to compare the pretest and posttest. Mean values of the questionnaire results were calculated from responses from the teachers and students.

RESULTS

An analysis of the findings is shown in Table 3. Problems which were reported by more than 60% of the teachers as being needed to insert into learning activities ranged by priority were narcotic taking (78.77%), alcohol drinking (76.03%), quarrelling (violence, aggression, offence) (75.34%), cyber dangers (chatting and playing games) (71.92%), smoking (68.49%), pornographic materials (video clips, comics, VCDs) (63.01%), and sexual misconduct (60.96%). Furthermore, the social skills that the teachers reported as being needed to enhance via learning activities ranged by priority were interpersonal relationship and communication skills (41.10%), decision making and problem solving skills (36.30%), and coping with emotion and stress skills (22.60%).

The development of the learning model consisted of six components: 1) foundation approach and theory; 2) objectives; 3) learning steps (syntax); 4) social system, 5) principle of reaction; and 6) support system. The third component, syntax, consisted of 6 steps as follows: Building awareness, Enhancing experience, Exchange, Presentation, Concept conclusion, and Application of the concept. Every component was evaluated by the experts at a “High” level of propriety. ($\bar{X} = 4.28$) The details are shown in Figure 1.

The effectiveness of the developed model was tested with its actual implementation at the selected schools. They were chosen so that there were an equal number of small-sized, medium-sized, and large-sized schools. The effectiveness was measured as 85.41/88.68, 84.21/88.52, and 84.45 /84.87 respectively. All were higher than the pre-set effectiveness (80/80). The details of the efficiency/effectiveness are shown in Tables 4-6.

The comparative findings of pretest and posttest scores found that the experimental group had significantly higher posttest score than the pretest at .05 level. The details are shown in Table 7.

The results of the questionnaires given to teachers and students found that the overall mean value was at the “High” level for both groups. The highest level of mean value was the responses of students that the lessons were related to their daily life ($\bar{X} = 3.49$). The next highest mean values were the two questions, that the activity was similar to

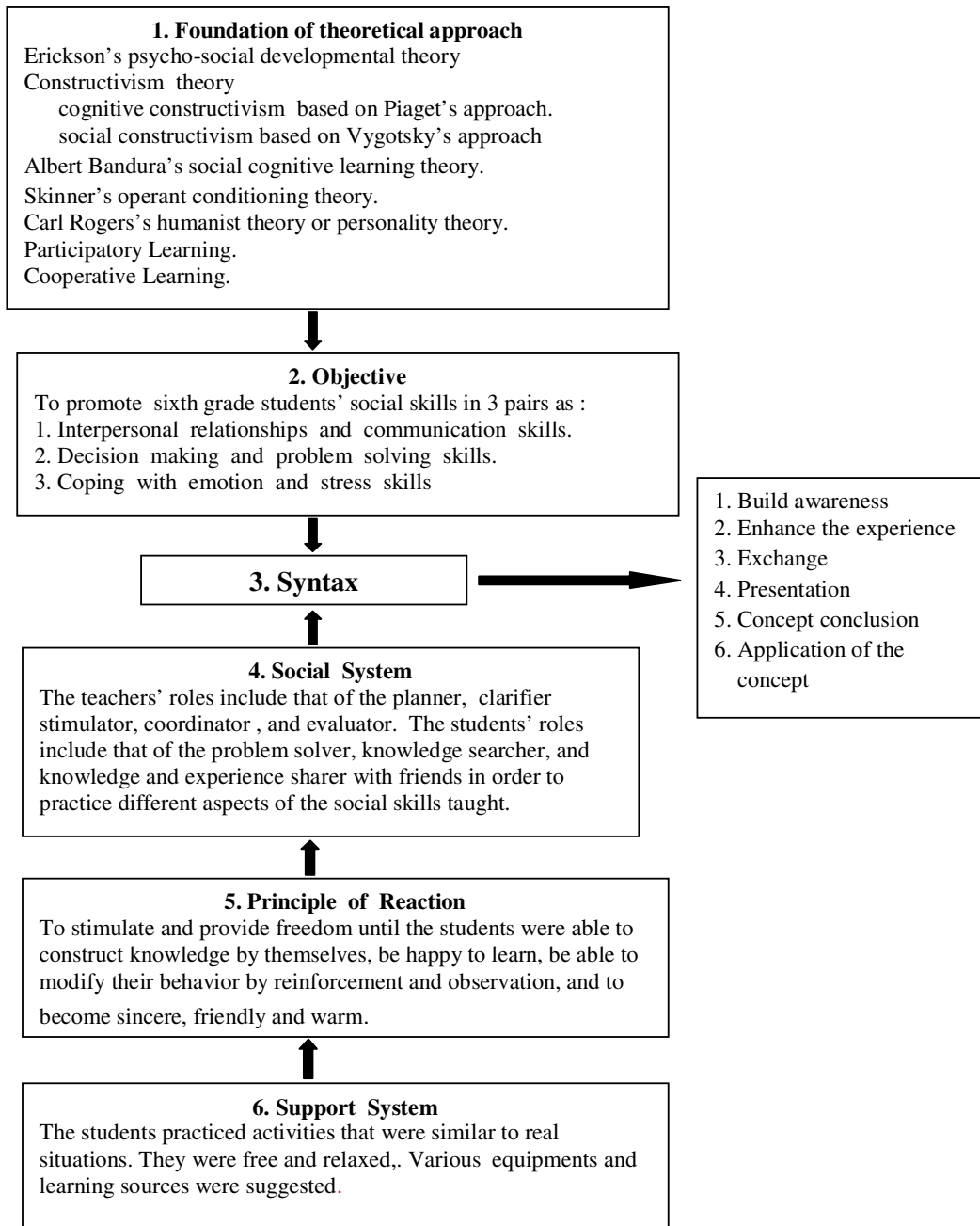


Figure 1. The details of learning model.

Table 4. The efficiency/effectiveness of the model at small-sized schools (n=84).

Result of learning	Full marks	\bar{X}	Percentage of means
Efficiency (E_1)	1,040	888.22	85.41
Effectiveness (E_2)	80	70.94	88.68
Efficiency/effectiveness (E_1/ E_2) = 85.41/88.68			

Table 5. The efficiency/effectiveness of the model at medium-sized schools (n=122).

Result of learning	Full marks	\bar{X}	Percentage of means
Efficiency (E ₁)	1,040	875.81	84.21
Effectiveness (E ₂)	80	70.82	88.52
Efficiency/effectiveness (E ₁ / E ₂) = 84.21/88.52			

Table 6. The efficiency/effectiveness of the model at large-sized schools (n=158).

Result of learning	Full marks	\bar{X}	Percentage of means
Efficiency (E ₁)	1,040	878.27	84.45
Effectiveness (E ₂)	80	67.90	84.87
Efficiency/effectiveness (E ₁ / E ₂) = 84.45/84.87			

Table 7. The comparative findings of pretest and posttest mean values from schools of three different sizes.

school size	measurement	n	\bar{X}	df	S.D.	t	p
small-sized	pre-test	84	54.86	83	9.095	16.207	.000*
	post-test	84	70.94				
medium-sized	pre-test	122	58.54	121	8.803	15.406	.000*
	post-test	122	70.82				
large-sized	pre-test	158	54.17	157	8.770	19.676	.000*
	post-test	158	67.90				

*significant at the level 0.05.

real situations, and that it provided opportunities for students to think and work independently without stress. ($\bar{X} = 3.47$). For teachers, the highest level of mean value was in response to the question that the learning model could enhance the students' development of interpersonal relationships and communication ($\bar{X} = 3.72$). Competency in enhancing the students' decision making and problem solving skills was second ($\bar{X} = 3.61$), and the students' activity management could enhance the emotional and stress management skills was third ($\bar{X} = 3.56$).

DISCUSSION

The objectives of this study were: 1) to study the situation, problems, and need for a learning model, 2) to develop the learning model, 3) to study the effectiveness of the learning model, 4) to compare the social skills between pretest and

posttest, and 5) to inquire of the opinions of students and teachers on the resulting learning model. Four issues arose to be discussed as follows:

1.The problems that the teachers thought would occur among the sixth grade students included narcotic taking, alcohol drinking, quarrelling, cyber dangers, cigarette smoking, pornography, and inappropriate sexual behavior, in that order. This speculation was supported by reports of risky situations faced by Thai children conducted by various research teams in many provinces. Various sources of data were collected from many years. The common problems of concern were found to include: 1) alcohol drinking; 2) cruelty and violence had increased; 3) gambling, especially online, 4) various issues around sex, including free sex and unsafe sexual relations (Nakontap, 2011). The study indicated that those problems obviously affected Thai children and youth in their daily lives, and these issues were likely to become increasingly serious. Consequently, in order to alleviate those problems, there should be a

learning model for enhancing the social skills of vulnerable children and youth so that they would be more able to survive from these problems.

2. The developed learning model for enhancing the sixth grade students' social skills, consisted of six components: 1) foundation approach and theory; 2) objective; 3) learning steps (syntax; 4) social system; 5) principle of reaction, and 6) support system. Syntax consisted of six steps: Build awareness, Enhance the experience, Exchange, Presentation, Concept conclusion, Application of the concept. The evaluative findings were scored at a "high" level of propriety. The developed learning model was based systematically on the approach of Joyce, Weil and Calhoun (2004) whose own model included stating the goal of learning, the principle or basic approach of the model, the details of all the teaching steps, and an evaluation based on the model. Arends (2001) too concluded that the essential components of a learning model need to include the goal of the learning activity, which should be based on a proper theoretical approach in developing the learning model. Additionally, the expected learner outcomes, the learning management techniques for accomplishing the model's objectives, and the learning environment which would lead to the expected outcomes need to be fully articulated. Furthermore, the researcher interviewed the panel of experts who had related experiences with social skills development in these sorts of social issues. These gave the researcher valuable insights related to what the components of the learning model should be in order to effectively develop the students' social skills in concrete form. Furthermore, the six steps of learning depended on the application of the design of the lessons for developing every issue of the targeted social skills. In each step, the basic theoretical approach of the learning model was ranked in order from easy to difficult. This approach was supported by Kammanee (2010)'s conclusion that the development of a learning model had to be systematically organized by considering the related theories and principles, and they be related with each other in order to lead the students to accomplish their goals. Moreover, Sirithadakunlaphat (2008) developed a learning model for enhancing the social skills and emotional quotient for second class level students with special ability. Her model used six steps of the learning process: 1) thinking inspiration; 2) thinking expansion; 3) real practice; 4) group presentation; 5) conclusions and evaluation; and 6) application and knowledge use. She found significant differences in posttest scores of social skills and emotional quotient between the experimental group and those of the control group.

3. The findings in implementing the learning model were that:

1 The effectiveness of the learning model was higher than

the specified criterion (80/80).

2. The comparison of pretest and posttest scores found that the posttest mean score was significantly higher than the pretest at .05 level.

The literature that informed the developed learning model included such important theories as Piaget's Constructivism (Woolfolk, 1995) focusing on the stimulation by questioning in order to cause new knowledge. Use was made of Vygotsky's approach emphasizing the students' ability to construct knowledge through the social interactions with other people, who can support the students who were in lower level of Zone of Proximal Development by scaffolding from teachers and friends through the emphasis on group activity (Slavin, 1994). Importance was also placed on the application of the social cognitive learning theory of Bandura (Bandura, 1986) in observational learning from the model. Since the teachers and friends were major sources of cooperative learning, the student-centered approach to learning involved small groups helping each other, communication, teamwork, collaborative thinking and problem solving, and mutual encouragement. These forms of enhancing each other's learning competency to accomplish the learning goal by emphasizing on the group success affected each other's success (Kagan, 1994). Participatory learning was combined with group process based on components of cycle in experience learning (Kolb, 1991). As a result, the students were in a context to share their knowledge with each other, and collaborate in working in order to accomplish their goals. Many previous research studies have supported these approaches in successful learning. Queen (2009) found that the cooperative learning package could enhance the students' higher order thinking as well as problem solving skills. This method was able to develop the students to achieve better learning and resulting in positive social changes. The students could learn by themselves and cooperate in learning. Johnson (2009) found that the cooperative learning techniques had positive effects on students' learning in lower secondary school through the interaction with others, including children and adults, their parents, teachers, and friends. Docksay (2011) devised a model affecting the students who had adjustment mental problems which would affect their study in other subjects. The model was called SEL (Social and Emotion Learning), focusing on their livelihood in society, caring for others, the development of friendship and communication, and decision making and problem solving. It was found that SEL (Social and Emotion Learning) could increase the students' social skills. McClatchy (2011) studied how to practice in order to cause the students to obtain their social skills as well as good manners in society by using a learning package focusing on the parents' participation in practice, serving as role models,

and the students' learning. Consequently, the students improved their social skills as well as acquiring the habits of sustainable learning.

4. The results of the questionnaires of student opinions found that the overall mean value was at the "high" level. The highest score was the students' opinion on the connection of the learning activity to their daily life. The second was that participation in the activity was similar to their real lives, and that it provided opportunities for students to think and work independently without stress. Likewise, it was discovered that the teachers' overall opinion was also at the "high" level. The highest scores were ranked in three categories: interpersonal relationships and communication skills, decision making and problem solving skills, and coping with emotion and stress skills. The stories used were described as being age-appropriate. As a result, teachers reported that the students were able to comprehend easily. In addition, the learning activities were not complex and were flexible. The students could present their performances in many forms, especially the role playing, which motivated the students and provided enjoyment participating in activities. This result was supported by Brunson-Upshaw (2009), in which four students between 8-10 years old with moderate autism were studied. During the experiment, the researchers read stories for students, repeated the same stories, then each of the experimental groups played roles according to the stories that had been read by the researcher. Four weeks later, it was found that the students had better social interaction development in some skills. Moreover, the learning model used forms of authentic assessment from observation of the group process. This served to make the students less anxious. In Thailand, the guidelines of the Office of Basic Education Commission (2011) found that the students' competencies for coping with different situations should be evaluated by observation, problem solving in specified situation, and analysis of changes in students' thoughts, beliefs, level of thoughtfulness, and intellectual immunity through reflection. Consequently, the teachers could view clearly while they were participating in the activities.

Conclusion

This study was the development of a learning model for enhancing the social skills of sixth grade students by developing a learning model and instructional activities based on input from a broad sample of teachers. It was found that the developed learning model was effective as specified by the criteria. In addition, the students taught by the learning model had higher posttest social skills than the pretest. Both of teacher and student answered the questionnaire positively, reporting that the activities could truly develop their social skills. Specifically, the

model sought the development of social skills for preventing future potential social problem when the students would be adolescents. This learning model could be applied in developing both social skills and life skills. Furthermore, the model could be applied in learning activity management for developing the social skills or life skills in other classes by designing the content to be appropriate with those classes. For teachers who would use it with students in classrooms of different sizes, the lessons are flexible in duration and varied in activity according to the propriety. Moreover, other techniques for data collection should be considered, such as focus group discussions for teachers or student-parent meetings to express their opinions on the current social problems they face and the needs their children have for developing their social lives in order to obtain broader and more varied information.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) have not declared any conflict of interests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was part of a innovation development project. We would like to thank the Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University for their financial support. We would like to thank the teachers and students for their participation this study.

REFERENCES

- Arends R (2001). *Learning to Teacher*. 5thed. Sinngpore : McGraw - Hill Higher Education .
- Arslan E (2011). An investigation of social skills in children with different perfectionism levels. *Educ. Res. Rev.* 6(3): 279-282. <http://www.academicjournals.org/ERR>
- Bandura A (1986) . *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Brunson-Upshaw DL (2009). The Effects of Role-Play Activities on the Social Interaction of Elementary Students with Autism. *Masters Abstracts International*. 47(06) : unpagged ; December.
- Deniz S (2013). The relationship between emotional intelligence and problem solving skills in prospective teachers. *Educ. Res. Rev.* 8(24): 2339-2345. <http://www.academicjournals.org/ERR/DOI:10.5897/ERR2013.1584> .
- Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development (2000). *The Handbook for Life Skills Development for Primary School Students*. Bangkok: Gansadsana Printing.
- Docksai R (2011). Teaching Social Skills Washington. *The Futurist*. 44(3): 12-13.
- Johnson T (2009). Are Two Heads better than one ? A Case Study for Cooperative Learning in a Middle School. *Dissertation Abstracts International*. 69(10) :unpagged ; April.
- Joyce B, Weil M and Calhoun E (2004). *Model of Teaching* . 7th ed. Boston : Allyn and Bacon.
- Kagan S (1994). *Cooperative Learning and Science*. San Clemente: Kagan Cooperative Learning.

- Kammanee T (2010). *Science of Teaching: Body of Knowledge for Efficient Learning Process Management*. 13th ed. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Printing.
- Kolb DA (1991). *Organizational Behavior and Experimental Approach*. 5th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Kuntajon K (2010). *The Effectiveness of Social Skills Development Program for Adolescents of Juveniles in Rehabilitation Center of Ubonratchathani Province*. Master Thesis, Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Thailand.
- McClatchy CO (2011). *Valley Children Learn Essential Etiquette Skills in McAllen this Summer*. Washington : s.n.
- Nakontap A (2011). *Thai Children in Cultural Dimension 2*. Bangkok: The War Veterans Organization of Thailand Printing.
- Phumkeaw P (2012). *Life Skills curriculum development by using thinking-based learning for Prathomsuksa 6 students*. dissertation. Doctoral Education Thesis, Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Thailand.
- Queen S (2009). Effect of Cooperative Learning and Traditional Strategies on Academic Performance in Middle School Language Arts. *Dissertation Abstracts Int.* 70(04) : unpagged ; October.
- Ramajitti Institute (2012). The report and analyzes the current situation of Thai's children in 2010 to 2011. Available at http://www.childwatchthai.org/projects.php?year_basic=4.
- Sirithadakunlaphat S (2008). *The development of instructional model for enhancing social skills and emotional intelligence for the gifted students in Prathomsuksa 4 - 6*. Doctoral Education Thesis, Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Thailand.
- Skills you need (2013). What are Social Skills?. Available at <http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/social-skills.html#ixzz3EmL7xAbY>.
- Slavin RE (1994). *Educational Psychology : Theory and Practice*. 4 th Ed. Needham Heights : Allyn and Bacon.
- The Office of Basic Education Commission (2011). *Life Skills Development in Basic Education System*. Bangkok.
- Woolfolk AE (1995). *Educational Psychology*. 6th ed. Boston : Allyn and Bacon.
- World Health Organization (1997). *Life Skills Education for Children and Adolescents in Schools*. Geneva Switzerland : WHO.