

**DEVELOPING PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF  
MUTTHATOMSUKSA STUDENTS. A CASE STUDY OF  
KHONSAWAN SCHOOL CHAIYAPHUM PROVINCE,  
THAILAND**

Siri Kaensa \*

**Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to develop the public consciousness of Matthayomsuksa students. The sample consisted of 180 junior high school students and high school students in Khonsawan School. The content used in learning management emphasized the school life, community and social lives, and the environment. The instruments for developing public minded consciousness included: 1) two-method lesson plans: lesson plans embedded with video-visual model behavior and simulated lesson plans; 2) the test of knowledge and understanding; 3) the assessment form of making decision and reasoning and 4) the assessment form of behavioral public consciousness. Two-way ANCOVA was employed in the data analysis. The results of the study were: 1) the developed two-method lesson plans for organization of learning as assessed by the experts showed the quality at the most appropriate level; 2) in experimental groups, high school students improved their public minded consciousness significantly more than junior high school students did when using lesson plans embedded with video-visual model behavior; 3) in the experimental groups, high school students developed their public consciousness significantly higher than junior high school students when using simulated lesson plans; 4) When using simulated lesson plans the experimental groups improved their public*

*consciousness insignificantly more than students who used simulated lesson plans; 5) There were interaction effects between the method and the grade of students on decision making and reasoning; and, finally, 6) after training and 6 weeks after the intervention program, the public consciousness of all experimental groups was higher than that of the control groups.*

**Key words** : public consciousness, developing, community, social lives, environments.

**Introduction**

The economic development process in Thai society constantly aims towards achieving the goal of economic development, which has led to undesirable social effects. The current problems include undermining the value system of the past. Generous acts among citizens, public property destructions, damaged soil erosion from agricultural and technological advances, and dam constructions causes changes in the courses of streams that result in some areas becoming deserts. Such destructions as deforestations also increase the earth's carbon dioxide output by 30%. In addition, environmental destructions cause a higher earth temperature level that results in such problems as droughts, flooding, severe storms, such as tsunami, hurricane Katrina and global warming. The records indicated that

---

\*Graduated student, Ph.D, Educational Administration and Development. Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, Thailand.

the year 1998 was the second hottest year in world history as a result of the world ecology being destroyed by increasing temperatures. The problems that occurred were totally the results of human actions, with the lack of public-minded behaviors being accelerated by technology consumption, which was partly caused by educational management failure.

The National Children's Health Institute found that high - learning ability students concentrated only on their studies, and lacked public mindedness, public activities, like helping other people. For the students with low learning ability, they reported that they attempted to behave differently by broadening their life experiences engaging in various temptations. In conclusion, both student groups lacked the consciousness of a public mind, morality and the fundamental concept of democracy. They were likely to be lazy, cheating, self-centered and jealous. Overall students' behaviors were not their fault, but resulted from the products of educational management, which could not adequately empower the construction of a conscious mind. Learning management should not directly emphasize learning through textbooks without learning in the community, social life and the environment. According to some educational authorities, the number of textbooks should be reduced. And teachers should increase their emphasis on co-operative learning, with society, community and the environment being considered the foundation of moral-ity and the root of democracy.

Developing personal public minds should be developed from a young age. The influential people on young's people's behaviors are parents, teachers, peers, and the public mass media. If these influential socializing agents pass public mindedness onto these young ones constantly, they can absorb the desired characteristics. In addition to this, learning and interest characteristics of

the children at each age are different. Thus the enabling public-minded development depends on each developer's strategies of how activities or learning experiences are organized for those children.

This study included using symbolic models through small literature books to develop Prathomsuksa Two Students' public minds, the results of using Prathomsuksa Three Students' role plays and models in a Public Mind Developmental Program, Practising skills of problem solving by presenting situations through computerized media to develop the public minds of Prathomsuksa Six Students, and the effects of using a developmental model on the public mind of primary students through the model of tales of public mindedness. The overall research approach implied different strategies to develop the primary students. However, the studies developing the secondary students in Thailand have not yet been found.

In this investigation, the researcher was interested in developing the secondary students' public mindedness by assessing public mindedness in three domains, including the cognitive domain, rational thinking in decision making and behaviors through two different teaching methods. Those methods comprise teaching through a behavioral video of a modeling technique and teaching through simulations in the cognitive domain relating to the understanding of rights and duties and the right of other people in the case of using public properties. The methods implied the acting effects or possibility and realizing environmental and global changes. The reasoning for decision making domain is the process or thinking style that is the person's principle of makings, decision based on Kohlberg's theory of moral development and classified into six levels. That is to say, the lowest level is the principle of avoiding physical punishment; while, the second is the principle of seeking rewards as objects. The

third is about doing to achieve the approval of others, and the fourth is about following rules, laws and religious regulations. The fifth is about self-respects and prides of right self-conducts. Lastly, the sixth level is holding onto universal moral principles, such as equality, justice and humanity and loathing badness (Kohlberg, 1964). The self-conduct is the students' behaviors expressing the following three characteristics; 1) avoiding using or acting to damage groups' major benefits; 2) holding duty of taking care of the majority in possible capabilities; and 3) respecting the right to use public property that is beneficial to -groups without possessing as well as allowing the others to do so.

As discussed earlier, the researcher believes that public mindedness should be habitually established. To enhance every student to become public-minded is to indicate the behaviors that lack a public mindedness or neglecting public participation in conserving public property that cause different problems affecting the public. The students will study the causes of the public problems that can affect themselves and how to solve them. Solving behavioral problems with the abovementioned two different teaching methods is likely to reveal how developing public-minded consciousness can be achieved. This investigation as aimed at revealing an appropriate model to develop children's and youths' public-minded consciousness, which can be influential to the nation in the future, and to produce guidelines for the official authorities to develop public-minded consciousness.

### **Purposes of the study**

There were four purposes of this study. Firstly, it was to develop the public-minded consciousness of the secondary students attending, Khonsawan School by managing learning through the audio-visual

of modeling behaviors and simulations. Secondly, the study aimed to compare the public-minded consciousness after the experimental intervention with different classes and managing learning methods as follows: 1) between the students in grade level 3 and 4 that managed learning through the audio-visual of modeling behaviors: 2) between the students in grade level 3 and 4 that managed learning through simulations: 3) between the students learning through different two methods of the audio-visual of modeling behaviors and simulations. Thirdly, it was to study the interaction effect of learning methods and grade levels on student's public-minded consciousness. Finally, it aimed to compare the public-minded consciousness of the experimental groups and the control group after one-week and six-week after the experiments.

### **Population and subjects**

The population in this study included 1,220 students in Khonsawan School, Khonsawan District, Chaiyaphum Province, Academic Year 2007. The sample subjects were 180 Mattayomsuksa 2 and Mattayomsuksa 5 students studying in semester 1, Academic Year 2007, categorized in four experimental groups, and two controlled groups, with 30 students in each group.

### **Procedure**

The contents of the experimental treatment, based on learning about school life, people in communities, society and the environment, comprised three parts. The first part consisted of school preservation by using public properties in school, taking care of property in school, and respecting the others' rights in using public property in school. The second was preserving Nongwaeng Lake. It is prohibited to hunt animals in the community

of Khonsawan District. A learning resource was one of the important watching bird areas in Chaiyaphum Province covering around 109 Rais, located about one kilometer from Khonsawan School, helping to watch out for the cleanness of Nongwaeng, helping to get rid of rubbish in the community, and helping maintain the climate. The final part was composed of preserving Phukhio Forest. Phukhio is the animal conservation area covering 975,000 Rais with wild animals and various rare plants. This is the original source of several important streams, one of important learning resources in Chaiyaphum Province, around 100 kms from Khonsawan School, self-conduct by following the forest regulations, helping preserving the ecological system, and helping preserve energy.

### **Definitions of public-minded consciousness**

Public-minded consciousness is defined as the beneficial or influential consciousness on communities and public societies, where by the ones affected may not be obviously seen but only known to receive those results. The public-minded consciousness includes three domains: 1) consciously public-minded, cognitively concernge with self-rights and duties and others' use of public property which the effects, the on-goings and environmental and global changes: 2) consciously public-minded reasoning of making decision as to the process or thinking characteristics the ones adopted based on Kohlberg's theory of morality: and 3) consciously public-minded behaviors expressing the avoidance of using or acting to damage the environment that is beneficial to groups, holding as a duty to take care of public property according to their own capabilities and respecting the rights to use public property beneficial to groups without

### **Different dimensions of public-minded consciousness development**

**“The development of public-minded consciousness”** refers to the process changes of the cognitive domain, reasoning of making decision domain, and behaviors to establish the consciousness of benefit, and the consciousness of effects on communities as a whole which the ones who are affected cannot be obviously seen but can only be known that the communities as a whole can obtain exact effects. Such changes result from managing knowledge, the interacting with environments by the students themselves, according to managing their learning activities.

**“Conscious public-minded cognitions”** refers to the intellectual capabilities resulting from students' learning processes based on their interactions to the environments involved by rights and duties in using public property with realizing the effects, the awareness of changes and preserving environments together with the world as a whole. The earlier cognitions were measured by questionnaire constructed by the researcher. If the scores are high, it means that the respondents have acquired a high level of conscious public-minded cognition.

**“Reasoning for conscious public-minded decision making”** refers to the process or thinking characteristics used as decisive principles, base on Kohlberg's theory of moral development and classified into six levels from low to high levels. That is to say, the lowest level is the principle of avoiding physical punishment; while, the second is the principle of seeking rewards as objects. The third is as acting for others' approval, and the fourth is following rules, laws and religious regulations. The fifth is as self-respects and prides of right self-conducts. Lastly, the sixth level becomes holding onto universal moral principles, such as equality,

justice and humanity and loathing badness, as measured by the questionnaire of reasoning for conscious public-minded decision making constructed by the researcher. If the students' scores are high, it means that the respondents have acquired a high level of reasoning for conscious public-minded decision making.

**“Conscious public-minded behaviors”** means the behaviors expressing characteristics as follows: 1) avoiding using or acting to damage the majority beneficial to groups: 2) holding as the duty of taking care of the majority in possible capabilities: and 3) respecting the rights to use public property that is beneficial to groups without possessing it, as well as allowing others to do so. Those three traits can be measured by an evaluative questionnaire of conscious public-minded behaviors. If the scores are high, it means that the respondents have acquired a high level of conscious public-minded behavior.

### **Learning management for public-minded consciousness**

Learning management for public-minded consciousness may be produced by different methods. This study pursues two methods; using modeling behavior video learning and learning through simulations.

**“Learning management method using modeling behavior video learning”** refers to activities intended to practice thinking, giving reasons of public-minded consciousness. The students observe the models of avoiding acting that causes the ruin of damages to the public property that is beneficial to groups. Holding as one's duty covers the participation of taking care of the public property which can be done and respecting the rights to use the public property cooperatively and in a way that is beneficial to groups by not possessing such things, together with not hindering others' chances to use those public property. Those behaviors were presented through a video to

motivate the students' feelings by comparing the modeling behaviors and themselves, imitating the modeling behaviors and following those behaviors over the course of 18 periods (50 minutes a period) of learning management.

**“Learning management method through simulations”** refers to activities for practicing giving reasons for the consciousness of public-minded behaviors. The activities are similarly organized to the actual situations. Then the learners played the roles following the situations related to avoiding causing damages to public property. Holding as duties covers the participation of taking care of the public property and respecting the rights to use the public property cooperatively as beneficial to groups by not possessing such things together with hindering the others' chances to use at public property. Those activities' results were participatively analyzed and discussed within 18 periods for 50 minutes each period.

The two learning methods emphasized three domains: cognitive, thinking of reasoning to make decisions and behavioral domains. Each method was likely to be effective to develop those three domains and the prior research showed that the effective results consisted of using the peer influences by the method of group discussions. The group members who gave their low level reasons mixed in the higher reasoning group, or the experimenter told the reasons or higher knowledge level to the children group and did not tell some of them. When discussing the issues, those children of higher reasoning or knowledge level (and more members) gave their reasons in problem solving at a higher level than the low reasoning group, and did not know the answers. With the peer influences and the trainer's supports, children using the low level reasoning finally accepted the high level reasoning by using modeling directed by teachers, more mature children,

or the same aged peer whom the children admired for their abilities or reasoning. The researcher attempted to manage the children to encounter judging the problems and rationalize the models opposite to the reasons that they made decisions as well as making up the easy situations for them to imitate. As a consequence, the children imitated the models acting in the behaviors of conscious public-minded reasoning. It can be said that the method of using peer influence could highlight the characteristics they imitated in the role-play simulations. This inspired the children's knowledge of previous higher level reasoning. After that, situations were provided to express the reasons to judge the problems or present the opinions to the others, using the learning principles of playing roles in simulations. Doing so caused the children to accept new higher level reasons. While developing higher cognition, managing every learning model inspired the learners to meet their higher knowledge level. The method of promoting knowledge was conducted by learners' meeting contrasting situations and having discussions about them. In the conclusive discussion, teachers found out the suitable chances to teach or present the new reasons which became possible in the case of some students' reasons matching the level needed, and then the teacher supported and accepted their students. If none of the students could use reasoning, the teacher presented her ideas, emphasizing the most correct and appropriate reasons.

### **Instruments for developing public-minded consciousness**

The instruments used to develop public-minded consciousness included four categories. The first type included learning lesson plans with two methods which were sub-categorized as learning lesson plans through modeling the behavioral video, constructed by the researcher together

with the assistance of the Student Council committee at Khonsawan School, where this investigation was conducted. The committee of the Students Council and the researcher helped create the simulation scripts, which were checked by specialists in terms of inter-congruence. The researcher chose the actors, rehearsed acting, and acted to shoot the scenes of the modeling video. Then the video was re-checked by the specialists before managing learning through three methods: 1) Lead-in: the researcher led-in to present the models by talking to the students about what to observe: 2) Presenting the models: presented the story of the models by showing the video for the students to observe the models' behaviors. The researcher asked questions to encourage the students to discuss and think to imitate: and 3) Conclusion: The students concluded what they had observed.

The second type of instrument, comprising the test to assess knowledge and understanding, was constructed by the researcher as a 20-item objective test. Each item had five response choices. The score range of assessing this variable is between 0 and 20. The high scores implied a high knowledge of public-minded consciousness. The third one was the questionnaire assessing making a decision of reasoning was constructed by the researcher and contained 20 items with six choices based on Kohlberg's six levels of moral reasoning. Each level symbolizes its score. The score range of assessing this variable was between 20 and 120. The high scores imply a high knowledge of public-minded consciousness. Lastly, the evaluative questionnaire of conscious-public-minded behaviors, with five rating scales constructed by the researcher, included 20 items. The students evaluated themselves, supervised by their teachers' checking appropriate ways to respond. The score range of assessing this variable was between 20 and 100. The high scores implied a high knowledge of public-

minded consciousness.

## Methodology

The research methods of this study included four steps. First, the subjects of grade level 3 students were randomized by a simple method of picking out their name labels and Mattayomsuksa 2 students were to be the representatives. Then, they took the test of the public-minded consciousness before the experiment was conducted, and the subjects who gained the standard t-score of lower than 50 were selected to be included in two experimental groups and one control group of 30 in every group. Second, the grade level 4 students were randomized by a simple method of picking out their name labels and Mattayomsuksa 5 students were to be the representatives. Then, they took the test of the public-minded consciousness before the experiment was conducted and the subjects who gained the standard t-score of lower than 50 were selected to be mixed in two experimental groups and one control group of 30 in every group. Third, the researcher categorized the groups for the experiment, with group 1 containing grade level 3 students taught by using modeling behavioral video, group 2 including grade level 3 students taught by using simulations, group 3 comprising grade level 4 students taught by using modeling behavioral video, and group 4 including grade level 4 students taught by using simulations. Fourth, the subjects were categorized into a total of 4 groups of 30 students in each, two experimental groups and two control groups. The overall number of subjects as 180 students. The study's research design was the Pretest-Posttest Control-Group Design. As illustrated below:

T1	Experimental Group No. / Class Levels / Learning methods	T2
	-Group 1 Grade Level 3 students taught by using modeling behavioral video -Group 2 Grade Level 3 students taught by using simulations -Group 3 Grade Level 4 students taught by using modeling behavioral video -Group 4 Grade Level 4 students taught by using simulations	

When:

T1 represents the assessment of public-minded consciousness before learning

T2 represents the assessment of public-minded consciousness after learning

The researcher collected the experimental data by assessing the public-minded consciousness in terms of knowledge and understandings, reasoning in making decisions of public-minded consciousness and the public-minded behaviors one week before the experiment for one week, and one week after the experiment.

## Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by using the statistical techniques: 1) the following basic statistics as the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (S.D.) and the percentage (%) to describe the background of the subjects: 2) the t-score (t) in calculating the scores of the public-minded consciousness in overall three dimensions: 3) the t-test of dependent samples in calculating the results: 4) a One-way Analysis of Covariance to compare the pre-test as the covariate in the difference test between the experimental and control groups: and 5) a Two-way Analysis of Covariance of the scores of the pre-tests and post-test scores, finally compared the pair differences by using the Scheffe' test.

## Results

The results of the study demonstrated the quality of the students' learning and moral reasoning had improved as a result of the two-method lesson plans for organization of their learning. In experimental groups, high school students improved their public consciousness significantly more than junior high school students when using lesson plans embedded in the video-visual model's behavior. The experimental groups, high school students also improved their public consciousness significantly more than junior high school students when using simulated lesson plans. There were interaction effects between the method and the grade of students on making decision and reasoning. Finally, after training and 6 weeks after the intervention program, the public minded consciousness of all experiment groups were better than those of the control groups in three domains including the public conscious knowledge and understanding, thinking of moral reasoning- or decision making of public consciousness, and behavioral public consciousness.

## Observations from this investigation

This investigation had several limitations, because it was an experimental design conducted in naturalistic classroom situations. The results were based on different conditions and limitations as to the time duration for the experiments and should have been conducted in normal classes, because the subjects were worried about missing out on important work in their classes. In addition, the research staff participated in assessing the subjects and had a lot of teaching classes, so they could not take part in every experimental assessment that could affect the assessment. Finally, at any time in the experiment, some activities might be delayed because of some inconvenient conditions. From the overall suggestions, it could be seen that the variables studied might affect the current investigation. Therefore, before adopting the activities for learning or the research results, teachers should consider different factors and conditions, as well as the important variables affecting this investigation in terms of managing the activity process and different classroom environments.

### References

- Arbuthnot, J.B. and Faust, D. (1981). *Teaching Moral Reasoning: Theory and Practice*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Barsamian, & Chomsky, N. (2001). *Propaganda and the Public Mind*. Toronto: South End Press.
- Gore, A. (2006). *An Inconvenient Truth*. Necessary film A.O.Scott, The New York Times., New York.
- Gruenberg, C. (1935). *Science and The Public Mind*. New York.
- Kohlberg, L. (1964). *Development of Moral Character and Moral Ideology*. Review of Child Development Research, Hartford, CT,: Printers,
- Kurtines, W, & Grief. B.E. (1974). *The Development of Moral Thought : Review and evaluation of Kohlberg' s Approach*. Psychological Bulletin.
- McGraw-hill, (1977). *Piagetian Inventories: The experiments of Jean Piaget*. Paris: Center for Educational Research and Innovation. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- Stokes, M. (1997). *The Nature of Mind*. London: McFarland & Company, London.