

## Factors Affecting the Success of ASEAN Children News Centre (ACN)

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### Abstract

This study has used qualitative approach. All key informants were purposively selected based on their relevant works, duties, and experiences with all kinds of communication and media for youths and children from all levels. Results were 1) policy & people factors found all ASEAN member countries should have their own tangible and continuous policy to raise more awareness to all their children to recognize how important of ASEAN region besides from each own country then integrated with other member countries; 2) media & activities factors found all ASEAN children should be trained about media literacy, so they can apply to their real uses in their daily life as well as their own communication channel that links to each other with participatory base collaboration; and 3) management factors found Policy management: ACN must take the tangible role to be the communication channel for all ASEAN children to share, to facilitate and create. Place management: Should be able to use all facilities of the host agency and all its networks. Budget management: Be more tangible and systematic management among all pilot schools as well as all relevant networks both in Thailand and in other ASEAN member

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countries; and Networks management: Should set up clear structure among all networks as well as other relevant partners in working together for ACN both at the country level and at the regional ASEAN levels.

**Keywords:** ASEAN Communication, ASEAN Children News Centre (ACN), Media Management

## Introduction

The integration story of Southeast Asian nations, widely known as “ASEAN,” began in 1967, and there are significant changes to the Southeast Asian region. For decades, ASEAN has played an instrumental role in maintaining political stability, fostering economic, trade and investment cooperation, as well as facilitating technology transfer and greater mutual understanding among its member nations. It also serves as a cultural melting pot through intra-regional immigration. These have continuously driven forward the ASEAN community, which has a combined population of over 642 million. (<https://asean.org/>, retrieved Jan. 12, 2019)

Thailand’s assumption of the ASEAN chairmanship in 2019 is critical to its role in the region as it aims to continue the agreement of the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu, Philippines, ASEAN leaders have agreed to shorten the time in order to speed up the establishment of the ASEAN Community, which shall be completed within five years, by 2015; the integration of the ASEAN Community that community has been divided into 3 different communities such that each congregation has the following goals

1) ASEAN Political- Security Community- APSC aims to promote cooperation in political and security affairs; to strengthen and maintain the peace & stability of the region; to make each country lives together in peace; and can resolve problems and conflicts that are made possible by peaceful means.

2) **ASEAN Economic Community**- AEC also aims to create ASEAN the same market and production base and to make the movement of goods, services, investment and skilled labour freely.

3) **ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community**- ASCC aims to enhance quality of life of the population in member countries, the well-being, a good environment, and a feeling of unity during the enclosing cooperation in six areas as follow; (The Department of ASEAN Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs Thailand, 2019) <http://www.mfa.go.th/asean>, 2019).

ASEAN Community is a cooperative agreement with the most progressive and the emergence of this community in 2015, and also is intended to have an extensive impact and make a difference in the socio-economic among aspects member countries with the most extensive. Communication and ICT have been recognized as the important tools to link and facilitate among all ASEAN community.

Home to more than 620 million people, ASEAN is a region filled with vast opportunities. By connecting ASEAN through Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, we are creating a regional network of people and infrastructure to improve the way we live, work and travel (ASEAN Foundation, 2019).

ASEAN children and youths are one among the focus group of the ASCC. Various of relevant missions and activities such as the “ASEAN Children Forum” (ACF) serves as official venue for ASEAN children to; 1) participate in any activity of ASEAN Community since 2015, 2) express their views and pursue aspirations on issues affecting their lives and other regional issues of their interests, and 3) cooperate and work together toward contributing to regional development.

In Thailand, in partnership with UNICEF, the Thai Youth News Centre (TYN) has established in 30 schools all over the country since 1998. Children and youths’ media created and produced by TYN members have been broadcasted via various channels i.e. the national TV channel, local channel, the Public Services TV channel and also online channels. Many awards from all levels have been recognized such as “Best of ASIA” from Japan; “Best of the world” from International Emmy award 2007, New York, USA and etc.

With all the continuous success of Thai Youth News Centre (TYN) since its beginning till currently, it has proved its sustainability, its fame, its rewards, its continuous activities among all the member countries.

This is the reason why this research wants to study about all the relevant factors affecting to all the success of the ASEAN Children News Centre (ACN) which aims to sustaining and scaling the voice of all ASEAN children and youths from all member countries to voice their own country's dignity to others then finally will automatically yield all kinds of mutual understanding and success among all the ASEAN member countries as planned to be "*One Vision, One Identity, and One Community*".

## Objectives of Research

1. The study of "Factors Affecting the Success of ASEAN Children News Centre" has its objectives as follow;
2. To study the factors affecting the success of the ASEAN Youths News Centre (ACN);
3. To propose further suggestions to sustain the success of the ASEAN Youths News Centre (ACN).

## Research Methodology

Research tools is the semi- structure interview for the Focus Group Discussion (FGD); and the in-depth interview for the selected representatives from each agency and from each Member country of ASEAN.

Research tool's validity has done the content validity by using IOC (Index of Item Objective Congruence) among all the selected expertise then use the means score (+1, 0, -1). The selected content is only 0.5 - 1.0 means, if means was below 0.5 it would be changed.

**Key informant:** One hundred and eight key informants in this research have purposively selected base on their relevant works, duties, and experiences with all kinds of communication and media for youths and children from all levels. One hundred and eight key informants used for Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Nine representatives from 9 schools of the ASEAN Children News Center (ACN) used for the in-depth interview.

**Data Collection:** Focus Group Discussion (FGD) have done in each ACN school network with 12 key informants; Online in-depth interview among the 9 selected representatives from each ACN school network.

**Data Analysis:** Descriptive analysis with narration was used for data analysis as of the research frameworks and all variables.

## Results of Research

The qualitative study of “Factors Affecting the Success of ASEAN Children News Centre” was conducted by using the focus group discussion among 108 key informants classified based on the type of organizations and their relevant functions about the “ASEAN Children News Centre” (ACN), and In-depth interview from the 9 representatives from ACN member schools. Findings are as followed;

**1) policy & people factors** mean relevant policies from GOs, NGOs, POs, BOs as well as other relevant agencies including vision, mission, and strategies of all those agencies relevant to ACN. The studied factors are 1) Relevant policies from GOs, NGOs, POs, BOs; and 2) Vision, Mission, Strategies. Findings are as followed; **Relevant policies** from GOs, NGOs, POs, BOs found the overall findings as follow; Policy of CAN among all member countries should be more systematic and continuously as well as integrated among all the member countries.

All ASEAN member countries should have their own tangible policy to raise more awareness to all their youths to recognize how important of ASEAN region besides from each own country. All ASEAN member countries should have the

collaborative policies among themselves in designing the ASEAN Youths Media and Communication Academy to be used among themselves to train, to empower about creative media and communication especially about ICT, social media, life skills, ASEAN heritages from each own country as well as the whole ASEAN heritages, how to communicating out to share as well as learned from the others.

**Vision, Mission, Strategies** about ACN found the overall findings as follow; ACN is taking its tangible role as one among the communication channel for all ASEAN member countries to share and care and link among all resources for each own and their own development as a whole. Because communication and media are very important for this ASEAN region because they are taking roles as the key link to all ASEAN member countries which can facilitate all well devilmnt among all the whole region. Creative Communication and media especially ICT & social media can facilitate and create all kinds of collaborations, negotiation among all the ASEAN member countries. This is very important regional issue because youths are the present the future of their own country as well as their own ASEAN region.

**2) media & activities factors** mean media literacy which composed of their access, analyse, and utilize to vice out their dignity of their own countries; and the “Activities” mean media and communication activities i.e. media camp, media project, media study trip as well as others relevant. The studied factors are 1) Media: Media literacy; and 2) Activities: Media camp, Media project, Media Study trip. Finding as follow;

Media: Media literacy found the overall findings as follow; All youths should be trained about media literacy, so they can apply to their real uses in their daily life.

Activities: Media camp, Media project, Media Study Trip finding as follow; Should be more ASEAN media that can serve real needs of youths and the general people according to the 3 pillars of ASEAN.

**3) management factors** mean ACN's management: People, Budget, Policy, Place, and others; and ACN's networks and its management. The studied factors are 1) ACN's management: Vision, mission, policy; and 2) ACN's networks. Finding as follow;

People management: Found a very saturated suggestion about the tangible host agency and having tangible organizational chart of ACN then all staffs, partners, networks, as well as all kinds of volunteers can do their best contribution as well as doing all kinds of effective collaboration and communication

Budget management: Found that ACN should be autonomous, dynamic but still under the umbrella of the host agency, then ACN can generate and seek any kind of appropriate funding to sustain their own activities as well as their members and network activities both in the country and in ASEAN region.

Policy management: Found that the clear policy of ACN among all member countries must focus on youths' empowerment especially about how to make benefits from creative media and communication.

Place management: Found that the host agency has to be designated with all facilities such as the Bangkok Metropolitan Office, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, etc. as well as its partners and networks in allocating the practical space for any kind of ACN's activities

## Conclusion and Discussion

The qualitative study of “Factors Affected the Success of ASEAN Children News Centre” has its 2 main findings from each research approach as follow;

Results regarding factors affecting the success of the ASEAN Youths News Center (ACN) has classified as follow;

**1) policy & people factors** mean relevant policies from GOs, NGOs, POs, BOs as well as other relevant agencies as well as vision, mission, and strategies of all those agencies relevant to ACN. The studied factors are 1) Relevant policies from

GOs, NGOs, POs, BOs; and 2) Vision, Mission, Strategies. Findings are as follow; Should have a very clear supportive policy for ACN. Then ACN can facilitate all youths in ASEAN region starting from Thai youths to create all kinds of creative contents to help strengthening each own country and the whole ASEAN gradually and finally.

All ASEAN member countries should have their own tangible policy to raise more awareness to all their youths to recognize how important of ASEAN region besides from each own country.

All ASEAN member countries should have the collaborative policies among themselves in designing the ASEAN Youths Media and Communication Academy to be used among themselves to train, to empower about creative media and communication especially about ICT, social media, life skills, ASEAN heritages from each own country as well as the whole ASEAN heritages, how to communicating out to share as well as learned from the others.

Vision, Mission, Strategies about ACN found the overall findings as follow; ACN is taking its tangible role as one among the communication channel for all ASEAN members countries to share, care and link among all resources for each own and their own development as a whole. Because Communication and media are very important for ASEAN region because it is taking role as the key link to all ASEAN member countries which can facilitate all well devilmnt among all the whole region.

Creative communication and media especially ICT & social media can facilitate and create all kinds of collaborations, negotiation among all the ASEAN member countries. This is very important regional issue because youths are the present and the future of their own country as well as their own ASEAN region. If all ASEAN members countries can link and share among each other, it would be very beneficial to all sectors of both at the present and in the coming future. All ASEAN youths and people can access to each other, share and learn among themselves. This will finally create the sustainable development among all the region.

2) **media & activities factors** mean media literacy which composed of their access, analyse, and utilize to vice out their dignity of their own countries; and the activities mean media and communication activities i.e. media camp, media project, media study trip as well as others relevant. The studied factors are 1) Media: Media literacy; and 2) Activities: Media camp, Media project, Media Study trip. Findings are as follow; Media: Media literacy found the overall findings as follow; All youths should be trained about media literacy, then they can apply to their real uses in their daily life.

All ASEAN youths can have their own Youths News channel to share and work among themselves. ASEAN media and news as well as all kinds of key information from each country should be more shared and communicated

Activities: Media camp, Media project, Media Study trip findings as follow; Should be more ASEAN media that can serve real needs of youths and the general people according to the 3 pillars of ASEAN. These activities should open more chance for all ASEAN youths to contribute with own media then sharing among the ASEAN region. Peers, alumni and volunteers should be more promoted then all groups as well as all sectors can contribute their own activities with CAN and ASEAN region as a whole.

Main findings from the research of “Factors Affecting the Success of ASEAN Youths News Centre” has some discussion as follow;

1) **policy & people factors** found to be the most important for CAN because all members, partners, relevant stakeholders and agencies agree that all the national government of ASEAN member countries should have a very clear supportive policy for ACN. So that, ACN can facilitate all youths in ASEAN region starting from Thai youths to create all kinds of creative contents to help strengthening each own country and the whole ASEAN gradually and finally.

2) **media & activities factors** found that all youths should be trained about media literacy, so they can apply to their real uses in their daily life. All

ASEAN youths can have their own Youths News channel to share and work among themselves. ASEAN media and news as well as all kinds of key information from each country should be more shared and communicated.

Both main findings aligned with the emerging and disruptive digital media which offers significant opportunities for engagement and connection between mentors and youth, but it can also pose potential risks. For example, texts, Facebook messages, and the likes, make it easy for mentors and youth to stay in touch on a day-to-day basis and directly communicate with one another in ways that can nurture the development of the relationship by fostering feelings of connection and also help to sustain it over time. Use of digital media between mentors and mentees may allow for greater ease in coordinating meetings and staying in contact, even in the face of changing schools, addresses, and phone number. Some adolescents may also feel more comfortable disclosing feelings or personal information via social media rather than in person (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

Digital media especially social media can also create various kinds of risks. It raises significant concerns about safety, privacy, as well as the potential for sharing inappropriate information and blurring relationship boundaries. For example, deciding whether to become friends over Facebook is not always a straightforward choice, as mentors must then consider carefully the content they post and the potential impact on their mentee. As a Facebook friend, mentors may also view content that raises ethical dilemmas, such as what to do if they view a post by their mentees that shows the mentee engaging in some type of risky behaviour (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

## **Suggestions**

The research of “Factors Affecting the Success of ASEAN Children News Centre” has its recommendations and suggestions as follow;

1) **policy & people factors** found to be the most important for CAN because all members, partners, all relevant stakeholders, and agencies agree that all the national government of ASEAN member countries should have a very clear supportive policy for ACN. Then, ACN can facilitate all youths in ASEAN region starting from Thai youths to create all kinds of creative contents to help strengthening each own country and the whole ASEAN gradually and finally.

2) **media & activities factors** found that all youths should be trained about media literacy, so they can apply to their real uses in their daily life. All ASEAN youths can have their own Youths News channel to share and work among themselves. ASEAN media and news as well as all kinds of key information from each country should be more shared and communicated. Those activities should open more chance for all ASEAN youths to contribute with own media then sharing among the ASEAN region. Peers, alumni and volunteers should be more promoted then all groups as well as all sectors can contribute their own activities with CAN and ASEAN region as a whole.

3) **management factors** (People, Budget, Policy, Place, and others) found the most important is Policy management: Have to set up clear policy of ACN focus on youths' empowerment especially about how to make benefits from creative media and communication. It should support collaborations among all partners and networks to share all relevant resources among themselves such as the professional staffs, the expertise, budget, equipment, information, facilities, etc.

Then followed by People and budget management: Should have the tangible host agency then having tangible organizational chart of ACN then all staffs, partners, networks, as well as all kinds of volunteers that can do their best contribution as well as doing all kinds of effective collaboration and communication. This factors should have more professional staffs as well as professional supportive staffs and volunteers especially about ICT and social media because this expertise needed to be updating all the time, then all youths could be trained in what is really needed and practical.

The host agency should have the tangible policy to support enough budget for all fundamental equipment for professional media production as well as their fundamental management. Moreover, at least once a year, activity among all ASEAN member countries should be generated. ACN should be autonomous, dynamic but still under the umbrella of the host agency, so ACN can generate and seek any kind of appropriate funding to sustain their own activities as well as their members and network activities for both in the country and in ASEAN region.

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