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Impact of organization of organization development interventions on human capital: a case study of Thailand Appreciative Inquiry Network

*Pinyo RATTANAPHAN**

Abstract

Thailand Appreciative Inquiry Network (AI Thailand) has been established on 2007. AI Thailand aims to spread Appreciative Inquiry throughout Thailand. At the beginning, AI Thailand had 32 founding members. These 32 founding members were from diverse background, education and ages. One of the most challenging problems AI Thailand faced at that time was: AI Thailand members lacked of Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry. If this problem was not properly addressed in a timely manner, AI Thailand would vanish. To address this challenge, the Researcher employed Action Research for eight cycles during eight months in order to develop AI Thailand members' Human Capital. Organization Development Interventions implemented included: Appreciative Inquiry, Appreciative Coaching and Knowledge Management. For impacts of Organization Development, Participants' Human Capital was developed. Human Capital consisted of 17 AI Champions, 12 AI Masters and 3 Apprentices. Participants were able to create impacts upon their organizations at diverse degree.

Keywords: Action Research; Organization Development; Appreciative Inquiry; Appreciative Coaching and Human Capital.

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Background

“Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. AI is a systematic discovery of what gives a system *life* when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human development (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005)”. This definition of Appreciative Inquiry sparked the researcher to pursue what Appreciative Inquiry was in 2006. This incipience led to the researcher’s findings of a lot of stories, reports and research. Later this led to the researcher’s decision to establish Thailand Appreciative Inquiry Network in 2007, the first official Appreciative Inquiry Community in Thailand. This small network attracted 32 founding members. Inspired by the researcher, these founding members committed to develop AI projects at their organizations. This required participants’ Human Capital or skill knowledge and experience in Appreciative Inquiry (AI). Since this mission was new to both the researcher and participants, the researcher then employed Action Research and Organization Development Interventions to develop participants Human Capital. In order to understand the situation before Organization Development Interventions were implemented, following is a brief history of AI Thailand, which will facilitate the understanding of the paper.

Brief history of AI Thailand

AI Thailand has been established since October 16, 2007 by the researcher. This was from the Researcher’s call to spread Appreciative Inquiry throughout Thailand. As the researcher is a lecturer at MBA Khon Kaen University, one of his responsibilities is to be a co-advisor to help MBA students develop a case study. Most of case studies before the researcher knew about Appreciative Inquiry were problem-based strategies and marketing. Most of case studies the students developed ended up with written reports only. No students reported that they had implemented such plans and achieve actual results. Thus in 2006, the researcher had encouraged three MBA students to develop and implement their case studies based on Appreciative Inquiry. It was the first time that students reported to the researcher with excitement. They reported that their business performance had showed improvement over a short period of time. They learned more about consumers. Most of strategies featured extremely low cost or no cost at all. Later through Appreciative Inquiry, the Researcher was able to help his client in a Textile Plant to develop extremely low cost strategies during Balanced Scorecard Training. The researcher realized at once that Appreciative Inquiry was a potential tool for management education and consultation. The researcher believes that it would be good for Thai management education and consultation as well as Thai society if people know how to apply Appreciative Inquiry. The Researcher then aimed to help as many as possible Thai people to learn and experience

Appreciative Inquiry. The question at that time was “*How to do that?*” Inspired by AI Common, the researcher aimed to spread Appreciative Inquiry in Thailand in the way Prof. David Cooperrider has done with AI Common. AI Common is the community for all AI Practitioners around the world. Unlike leading community in other fields, this community promotes all people to share materials, articles, research papers and dissertations in the field. Community members do not need to subscribe and pay for membership. AI Practitioners are allowed to report their movement like training courses and consultation services in AI Common’s website (<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>). AI Practitioners and AI communities around the world have been listed in AI Common’s website. The researcher believed at that time and today that AI Common was a model for the researcher to spread Appreciative Inquiry in Thailand. To spread Appreciative Inquiry, the Researcher has developed a non-paying Community of Practice supported by knowledge sharing infrastructure. In 2007, the researcher started to sell idea of Appreciative Inquiry to 32 people. These 32 members committed to apply Appreciative Inquiry in their organizations. Meantime the researcher submitted the information about the researcher’s initiative to AI Common. On October 16, 2007, AI Thailand was listed at AI Common. Few months later, the Researcher had launched AI Thailand’s website (www.ai thailand.org). This portal has been opened for public access. All people who are interested in Appreciative Inquiry are welcomed for membership without paying for subscription. This website becomes the knowledge portal for AI Thailand members and outsiders. Two years later, it is still the only a Thai website showing case studies of

Appreciative Inquiry in Thai. AI Thailand’s mission was as follows:

1. Build and bridge community of practices of Appreciative Inquiry in Thailand;
2. Outspread knowledge and values of Appreciative Inquiry in Thailand;
3. Develop professional AI practitioners in diverse sectors in Thailand;
4. Be a Headspring of practical knowledge gained from AI practices;
5. Innovate Open-source infrastructure that supports learning in Appreciative Inquiry.

AI Thailand’s mission can be summarized in simple term, “Develop as many as possible skilled AI Practitioners”. If AI Thailand did not have skilled AI Practitioners, all of the mission envisioned would not be possible. Without skilled AI Practitioners, it was not possible to develop professional AI Practitioners in diverse sectors. It was not possible to build and bridge community of practices of Appreciative Inquiry. In addition, outspreading knowledge in Appreciative Inquiry would not be possible as AI Thailand would not have Thai professional material as: case studies/storytelling and so on. It was then necessary to innovate an open-sources infrastructure supporting learning in Appreciative Inquiry as Thai participants had no Thai role model and case examples. Without Thai role models and case examples, it was not possible for AI Thailand to be a center for practical

knowledge gained from AI Practices. Basically, skilled AI Practitioners means participants who have “Human Capital” or knowledge, skills and experience in Appreciative Inquiry. Skilled AI Practitioner for our context means AI Thailand members who have developed one or more AI projects over the course of four months or more. One of AI projects covered 4-D or *Discovery, Dream, Design* and *Destiny* (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). This mission is vital for AI Thailand’s mission. During December 2007 till the end of January 2008, all participants and the Researcher worked together to find out topics of interest and developed Key Performance Indicators like sales growth or yield improvement. When ready, participants and the researcher had started Action Research on the beginning of February 2008. At once the researcher as the founder of AI Thailand faced challenge from his attempt to develop Human Capital.

Challenges of Human Capital Development

Before starting Action Research, the researcher had evaluated all participants’ motivation and situations. Initial assessment during January 2007 suggested that most of 32 participants joined AI Thailand because of one simple reason: they wanted to try a new way of thinking. They never heard about Appreciative Inquiry before. Most of participants acquainted with many managerial tools and concepts yet they still faced difficulty in applying them into the Thai context. Many were familiar with problem-based management tools like Q.C. which always ended up with problem identification but no solution. Basically these founding members expected that Appreciative Inquiry should provide a different, new and meaningful change in their organizations. Their demand posted a major challenge for the Researcher and his Organization, “AI Thailand”. If they will find that they can be helped to make successful positive changes in their organizations, their success stories would attract new generations of enthusiasts to join the AI Thailand’s movement. Meantime, the Researcher believed that successful AI Thailand members would help the researcher to spread Appreciative Inquiry to other communities. In participants’ context, though they were interested in Appreciative Inquiry, they faced many obstacles. For instance, all of participants were poor in English. However, at that time most of articles and theories were in English. They were few Thai articles mentioned about Appreciative Inquiry. There was even no case study in Thai showing how to apply AI and measure its impacts in Thai organizations. It was not possible at that time to translate some case studies into In addition, most of English case studies in Appreciative Inquiry were those written for large organization like AVON and NASA. Most of AI Thailand members were from very small organizations, mainly family owned.

The largest organization was a community hospital where three participants worked with. In addition, the methodology used in writing these case studies, was not suitable for the Thai situation. All English Cases were mainly a summary of official corporate annual meetings in which Appreciative Inquiry was used as a core intervention. However, no Thai participant was able to convince his/her organization to organize an official AI-based Annual Meeting or even a seminar. This is because in their context AI was new or even alien to their organization. In addition, many told the researcher that they were interested in AI but they believed they were not smart enough to run such kind of projects. Many already committed to develop AI projects but they were so busy. The researcher believed that if AI projects demanded them too much, most of them may give up and left the community. For the researcher himself, though he had experienced helping three entrepreneurs to develop AI projects. But these projects were not a full-scale planned change. Just implementing the new tool and experimenting with it for one month still we found some interesting improvement. Yet, there were no cyclical of change. In summary the situation of AI Thailand in the beginning was, in SWOT term was as follows:

Strength: (1) The researcher had some experience in AI, which enabled him to develop these 32 founding members; (2) The researcher believed that he and community members were able to apply Appreciative Inquiry in their current work practices. Appreciative Inquiry may be fit well to Thai culture.

Weakness: (1) Some participants lack of confidence; (2) Lack of case examples of Appreciative Inquiry applied in Thai context; (3) Many were busy people. They already had heavy work loads. If AI projects demanded them too much, they may choose not pursue their projects.

Opportunities: (1) Many members were top-notch MBA students who were also entrepreneurs and top managers in government or private organizations. They have authorities to champion AI projects in larger scales; (2) Most of participants showed commitment to experiment Appreciative Inquiry because it was new and intriguing.

Threats: (1) Some participants' influential stakeholders like business owners and managers disapproved with participants' AI projects; (2) The Researcher's experience in Appreciative Inquiry with three entrepreneurs was considered limited. For the Researcher was to apply this experience to 32 participants in the same time; (3) Participants had limited time. If AI did not work for them during the first two months, it was possible that the might discontinue the project.

Statement of the problem

The real challenge of AI Thailand at the beginning was; there were over 32 AI Thailand members who adopted the researcher's ideas and were aimed at developing their Appreciative Inquiry's skill, knowledge and experience or *Human Capital*. This was considered the real challenge because there was no one in this group with experience in applying AI in real context before. Most of them were busy. Some were facing resistance from their stakeholders. Some did not have confidence whether they were capable of developing AI projects.

Research objectives

1. To develop AI Thailand members' Human Capital"
2. To assess impacts AI Thailand members' organizations created upon their organizations.

Research question

1. To what extent AI Thailand members' Human Capital increased after ODIs?
2. To what extent Appreciative Inquiry impacted AI Thailand members' organizations?

Literature review

Appreciative Inquiry

According to Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), "Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. AI is a systematic discovery of what gives a system "life" when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human development. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential. It mobilizes inquiry through crafting an "unconditional positive question". Appreciative Inquiry gives way to imagination and innovation. Instead of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis Appreciative Inquiry works on four phases: discovery, dream, design and destiny (4-D). AI assumes that every living system has untapped, rich, and inspiring accounts of positive potential. Link this "positive change core" directly to any change agenda, and changes never thought of are possible suddenly and democratically mobilized.

The 4-D cycle can be applied as rapid and informal conversation with a friend, or college or a formal organization-wide process”.

Appreciative Inquiry is based on five principles: The *Constructionists* Principle, the *Positive* Principle, the *Simultaneity* Principle, the *Poetic* Principle and the *Anticipatory* Principle. The *Constructionists* Principle is the belief that a person’s future is an extension of what they know and do not know. The *Positive* Principle is the belief that both the coach and the clients are connected in the positive pursuit of a vision. When they both secure positive attitudes and action toward the goal, the consequence is the positive change. The *Simultaneity* Principle is the belief that inquiry and change happen in the same moment. The *Poetic* Principle suggests that a person’s life story can be re-imaged and restructured toward more positive and wonderful actions. The *Anticipatory* Principle states that a particular vision can direct current behavior.

Appreciative Inquiry and its implication

To date, OD Practitioners have applied Appreciative Inquiry in diverse fields including education, community development, healthcare industry, and process innovation. Implication from Appreciative Inquiry included improved participants motivation, learning, process and organizational performance. Some projects resulted in more innovate process.

Yballe and O’Connor (2004) proposed the idea of a Pedagogy of Education. The authors blended Appreciative Inquiry with Kolb’s Model of Experiential Learning (1984). The Authors found that students are more energized. Students felt a sense of safety when publicly speaking up. Students gained skill and confidence in Appreciative Inquiry as a creative alternative to objective analysis or problem solving. This article suggested that through Appreciative Inquiry, students gained more motivation to learn. Their behaviors in class were better. In addition, their performance has improved. Ricketts (2002) integrated Appreciative Inquiry is into Experiential Learning. The author reported that AI accelerated learning, relationship building, builds empathy, deepens trust and heightens mutual understanding. This article suggested that through Appreciative Inquiry students’ motivation and learning was higher. Calabrese (2006) used Action Research as a core research methodology and Appreciative Inquiry to address problems of one school facing the second highest dropout rate in the state. To resolve this challenge, an Action-researcher team used Appreciative Inquiry to find out what worked about teachers’ practice. The process helped teachers discover effective instruction and communication with parents. One year later, the school reported substantial progress in student achievements in mathematics and sciences. This article suggested that through Appreciative Inquiry teachers were able to develop innovative solution which resulted in better school performance. Newman and Fitzgerald (2001) had implemented Appreciative Inquiry as an intervention framed

by Action Research. This was a large-scale change effort targeting 120 participants at a non-profit metropolitan healthcare facility. It was found that there was improvement in all areas by the end of year three. Most importantly, this initiative led to better inclusion. This was different from the past where all meetings were dominated by white executives. This article suggested that through Appreciative Inquiry, executives' and staffs' behavior were changed. And organizational performance also was improved too. Chapagain (2005) reported that Appreciative Inquiry had been used for leadership training organized by Plan International Nepal (Chapagain, Ojha, 2008). Participants reported positive impacts. For instance, leadership development and networking skills were improved. Learning level in personal and organization level improve. Skill in Appreciative Inquiry was advanced. Feedback exchanging culture enhanced. This article suggested that through Appreciative Inquiry, participants learning and behavior as well as organizational performance can be improved. Silbert, Silbert and Daykin (2004) reported that Appreciative Inquiry was used to improve business processes for Exceptional Performance Awards in the US National Intelligence Community. This agency faced challenges in processing documents. It was a manually-intensive process and time consuming. It lacked consistency and standardization. The process also lacked of knowledge management. To resolve this problem, an OD consultant and IT project team adopted Appreciative Inquiry. They organized 12-15 meetings lasting for 1-1.5 hours. This initiative resulted in reduced time for document processing from an average 34-126 days to 0.33-3 days. This article suggested that through Appreciative Inquiry, participants were able to develop process innovation and thus improve organizational performance. Feinson and Nohr (2006) implemented Appreciative Inquiry at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center at New Jersey. The purpose of this intervention was to address challenge in patient safety. Consultants and nursing teams then studied what worked and why. Solutions then were identified. Nurses reported that they become enthusiastic and were motivated to implement what they found. Innovations from this intervention were for instance Low-risk Cardiac Transport Protocol. 60% increase in the number of patients able to be transported without a cardiac monitor resulting in cost saving of 67.5 hours of nursing time saved per month. Relationships among nurses were improved. This article suggested that through participants with higher skill in Appreciative Inquiry were able to develop innovation which enhanced organizational performance. This means by practicing Appreciative Inquiry, participants' learning is initiated. To make this picture clearer, literature of some relevant learning theories is reviewed as follows:

Theories of Learning and Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is fit to many Learning Theories. Bruner (1962) stated that learning occurs during problem-solving situations. Through Appreciative Inquiry, participants may find solution of challenge they are facing, this would

cause learning according to this theory. Argyris (1977) argued that learning starts when learners begin to question underlying assumption and policies. Appreciative Inquiry was related to this theory because through Appreciative Inquiry's Discovery process, participants might begin to question underlying policies and practices. This might cause learning according to this theory. Schön (1983) argued that to engage in continuous learning, an individual's capacity in reflecting on his/her action is crucial. Through Appreciative Inquiry, participants are encouraged to reflect what worked on his/her experience. This might causes learning according to this theory. In summary by practicing Appreciative Inquiry might enhance participants' learning. By practicing Appreciative Inquiry, learners were able to enhance their own Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry.

Conceptual framework

Review of literature suggests that through organization members' increased Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry will result in improved motivation, innovation and organizational performance. Conceptual Framework is as follow:

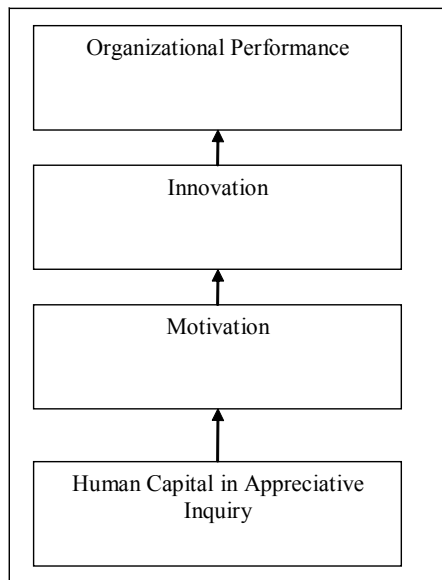


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

From the conceptual framework, the Researcher assumed that Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry influences: Motivation, innovation, Organization performance.

Method

Participants

Participants are 32 AI Thailand's founding members. They were all MBA students at the College of Graduate Study in Management at Khon Kaen University, Thailand. Ten of them are males while twenty-two are females. Participants are from diverse background including Business Administration, Engineering and Nursing. Their professions ranged from Government Employees, Business Owners, and Top Management in Government Agencies or Private Companies. All of them were introduced by the Researcher to Appreciative Inquiry and its possible implications. All participants were asked, after finishing AI projects, to develop written detailed case studies how they have applied Appreciative Inquiry in their organizations with measured varied performance indexes. Before starting these projects all participants discussed with the Researcher defined the scope of the project and the Key Performance Indicators.

Research Methodology

Action Research was adopted as a core Research methodology in order to develop participants' Human Capital. Action Research (French and Bell, 1990) is "the process of systematically collecting research data about an ongoing system relative to some objective, goal, or need of that system; feeding these data back into the system; taking actions by altering selected variables within the system based both on the data and on hypotheses; and evaluating the results of actions by collecting more data". In this Dissertation, the model used for Action Research is based on the work of Stringer (1996). It consists of three steps: Look, Think and Act. Look consists of Gathering relevant data and describing the situation. Think consists of exploring/analysis of problems and then interpreting/explaining the situation. Act consists of planning, implementing and evaluating the actions taken. All Organization Development Interventions administered were recorded in Log. Researcher's Dairy and were kept for reflection. Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (Kolb, 1984) was employed as a model of Researcher's Dairy. There were eight cycles of Action Research. Each cycle lasted for one month. At the end of each month, the Researcher had developed a monthly Action Research Report and submitted to Dissertation Advisor for review and feedback. The Researcher had input her feedback to the new Action Researcher cycle.

Organization Development Interventions

Organization Development Interventions implemented included Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005), Appreciative Coaching (Orem, Binkert, and Clancy, 2007) and Knowledge Management (Takeuchi and Nonaka, 1995).

Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). Appreciative Inquiry consists of Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny (4-D stages). The Researcher at first worked with participants so that they were able to identify their “Affirmative Topics”. The Researcher and participants discussed in person or in group so they were able to find the Affirmative Topics. These Affirmative topics were related to participants’ work, and were something that participants wanted and enjoyed doing. After Affirmative Topics were selected, the next step was “Discovery”. Discovery was the step where the participants are to find “the best of what is” in their field of interests. Participants were coached how to craft AI interviews’ questions. They were asked to conduct pair interviews with their friends. After that participants started AI interviews in the field. After participants conducted AI interview for a while, the Researcher helped them to find their “theme”. This led to the next step of “Dream”. Dream was the stage where participants ask themselves the question “What might be?” In this stage, participants were encouraged to envision the impacts. Next, it was the “Design” stage. Participants were to plan how to implement what they found during Discovery stage. Destiny was the stage in which participants implemented what they had planned.

Appreciative Coaching. Orem, Binkert and Clancy (2007) provided principles and practical guidelines for Appreciative Coaching. Appreciative Coaching deals with positive relationship between coach and his/her client. There are four stages here, which are: *Discovery*, *Dream*, *Design*, and *Destiny*. For *Discovery*, the researcher should develop a positive connection with his clients and help them develop a sense of possible. For *Dream*, the researcher should encourage and affirm the clients to create images of possibilities. For *Design*, the researcher should help his/her client to bring dream into reality and help him/her to make mindful choices/actions. For *Destiny*, the researcher should help his/her clients so they are able to expand their capacity to achieve their dream. This ODI was selected because participants faced many challenges. Some were not sure whether they were capable to develop AI projects. Some did not realize their opportunities. Some were facing hindrance in their organizations. They needed some guidance from the researcher.

Knowledge Management. In this dissertation, the *Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation* (Takeuchi and Nonaka, 1995) was implemented as KM interventions. KM interventions consist of four major components which are *Socialization*, *Externalization*, *Combination* and *Internalization*. *Socialization* was the process of sharing experience, creating shared mental model and technical skills. Planned Socialization included informal brainstorming to resolve problems, on-the job training, the researcher’s interaction with participants before and after participants’ AI projects. *Externalization* was the process of articulating tacit knowledge into explicit concepts. For this step, the researcher helped participants to integrate Appreciative Inquiry to their organizations or departments in diverse

fields and interests. In addition, the researcher facilitated participants to develop case studies in Appreciative Inquiry. For *Combination*, the researcher encouraged all participants who achieved in implementing AI projects to share their documents with others. *Internalization* was the process of embodying explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge. It was closely related to “Learning by doing”. The Researcher encouraged all participants to implement their AI projects in the real setting. Next Action Research’s, discourses and outcomes were summarized. This intervention was chosen because it provided a good guideline to develop Human Capital. Since AI Thailand members were from diverse background, they needed customized activities at individual and group levels. Through this model, the Researcher believed that he would be able to customize activities for such demands.

Evaluation of Impacts

Impacts on Human Capital. To measure to what extent participants’ Human Capital increased, through *Action Research*, the researcher developed an Individual Progress Evaluation. There was a need in developing this Evaluation because there was no existing measure for Human Capital development. In addition, each participant’s background, organization’s context, sizes of businesses and scales of AI projects were too diverse. Furthermore, it was the first time that Appreciative Inquiry was applied in Thai context. After Action Research had been initiated for three months, the researcher through *reflection* had witnessed four turning of individual progress through time. Their progress can be classified from lowest to highest. Such progresses were labeled as the New Wave, the Enthusiast, the Apprentice, the Master and the Champion. The New Wave was the participant who confirmed that they will join us. He/she want to do AI projects. The Enthusiast was the participant who already knows which kind of AI project they want to pursue. He/she already spotted his/her “Tipping Point” clients. The Tipping Point consists of the Connector, the Maven and the Salesman (Gladwell, 2001). They are drivers for popularity of idea, fashion and behavior. The Connectors are persons who are capable of connecting people. They know a lot of people. They know where to spread the idea and news. The Maven means the person who possesses in-depth knowledge. They love developing the idea. The third person was the Salesman. Salesman is a person who is capable of selling the idea. The researcher found that many AI Thailand members’ behaviors resemble those of the Connector or the Maven or the salesman or a combination of them. He named those persons who have one of these three personalities or a combined as the Tipping Point. For participants’ context, this Tipping Point may be people from their own organizations or outside their organizations like customers. The Apprentice is the participant who crafted AI interview questions and started AI interviews on 20-30 Key informants or over. AI Master is either: 1) the participant who already have reflected their peak experience at *Dream*, *Design* and *Destiny* process

and written them down as a case study; or 2) He/she found interesting discovery and finished one AI experiment. AI Champion is the participant who adopted Appreciative Inquiry as his/her flagship change model in his/her own organization. This Evaluation was redefined at Action Research Cycle 5. This evaluation should be validated in the future.

Impact on AI Thailand members' Organization. To identify whether Appreciative Inquiry improves participants' organization performance after Organization Development Interventions, unstructured interview was employed. The step in conducting an Unstructured Interview according to that of Robin, Keegan and Ward (2003) was adopted. The design of the Interview is based on the work of Preskill and Catsambas (2006). Content analysis was used to identify themes concerning level of impact that emerged. Levels of Impact emerged ranged from "Very High," "High," "Medium," "Low" and "Very Low" respectively.

Findings: impact of organization development on human capital

The researcher's attempt to develop 32 participants' Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry resulted in two levels impacts: impacts upon individual participants, participants' organization at diverse degree. Details are as follows:

1. *The individual participant level: Participants' Human Capital increased at diverse degree.* Individual progress at September 30, 2008 compared with that of February 1, 2008 suggested that participant's Human Capital increased from lowest level which was "the New Wave" to higher levels which were the: Enthusiasts, the Apprentice, AI Master and AI Champion respectively. These measures were based on: Subjective Evaluation of participants' written case studies and self-report. Details are as indicated in the following table:

Table 1. Summary of Individual Progress

Level of progress	Feb 1 2008	Sept 30 2008
AI Champion	0	17
AI Master	0	12
The Apprentice	0	3
The Enthusiast	0	0
The New Wave	32	0
Total	32	32

17 AI Champions who reported that they adopted Appreciative Inquiry as a core change model in their organizations in 2008. They reported that they used

Appreciative Inquiry as a flagship change model in their organizations. Out of these six AI Champions, three were extending their work on Diabetes Patient Management at a Community Hospital at Khon Kean Province. One participant was able to convince her Research Institute to adopt Appreciative Inquiry as a key methodology in developing Corporate Strategy. From the Researcher's observation, factors promoting Human Capital development of AI Thailand during February-September 2008 were as follows:

1. Most of AI Champions were the Tipping Point in their businesses. Some already had their own networks. They were able to convince many co-worker and immediate supervisors to participate in their AI projects without difficulties.
2. Most of AI Champions were working for AI projects with clear scope at the beginning. This situation allowed them to work on projects without conflicting with their routine jobs and immediate supervisors.
3. Case studies and storytelling played vital roles in Human Capital development in this context.

Though most of the participants were able to increase their Human Capital, some were not especially the Apprentice their common characteristics are as follows:

1. Two were facing chaos in their lives. .
2. Most of them did not seek feedback from the Researcher. Poor communication resulted in poor learning.
3. Unlike those who were AI Champion and AI Master, the Apprentice worked alone not in group.

2. The Organizational Level: Participants with higher Human Capital were able to create higher impact on their organizations. Post Interview revealed the potency of the impact. From highest to lowest.

Summary is as follows:

Table 2. Summary of data interpretation of impacts on organizations caused by AI Thailand members

Degree of Impact	Description	No
Very High	1. Improvement in objective (measurable by numbers) or subjective terms (not measurable by numbers like more friendly team working) and 2. Reported change in business process/practice after AI project, and 3. Observable Organization culture shift after AI project, and 4. Developed his/her AI community of practice/network during/after AI project.	6
High	1. Improvement in objective or subjective terms, and 2. Reported change in business process/practice after AI project, and 3. Observable Organization culture shift after AI project.	5
Moderate	1. Improvement in both objective and subjective terms, and 2. Reported change in business process/practice after AI project.	10
Low	1. Improvement in subjective terms only. 2. Reported change in business process/practice after AI project.	8
Very Low	Improvement in subjective term only.	3
	Total	32

Eleven participants out of 32 reported that their AI projects resulted in “very high impact” and “high impact” combined are 35% of participants. These findings are consistent with what Bushe (2005) found. Bushe (2005) conducted meta-analysis of 20 Appreciative Inquiry Projects done before 2003. The author found that 7 out of 20 cases or 33% showed transformational change. From the Researcher’s observation, at organization level, climates of organizations experiencing “Very High Impacted” and “High Impacted” by the AI projects can be characterized as follows:

1. Some organizations had been promoting quality improvement projects at that time like Kaizen projects. This situation allowed participants to experiment their ideas without interrupting routine jobs.
2. There were some Thai organizations like a community hospital and the National Research Institute where their co-workers have already experienced with some ODIs such as Knowledge Management, Dialogue and World Café.’
3. Participants were allowed to experiment ideas. All of participants did not need to explain and fight for budget.

From the Researcher's observation, characteristics of Organizations where participants found difficulty in creating high or higher degree of Impact during this Action Research are as follows:

1. Some organizations were facing fierce competition from superior rivals.
2. Some organizations which were too dynamic like a wholesaler. Participants were distracted by day-to-day operations.
3. Some organizations facing organizational chaos such as they were facing withdrawal of major shareholders.

Limitations and scope of the study

1. There was no validation of Researcher's Evaluation Strategy to assess Human Capital developed during this Action Research.
2. The scope of the project was limited to 32 founding members though during the projects AI Thailand was able to attract more members. Knowledge gained from Action Research developed for 32 founding members had been transferred to improve AI Thailand's organizational performance.
3. Each AI Project time line lasted about 3-5 months.

Conclusion

AI Thailand was just established in October 2007. The most challenging problems AI Thailand faced at the beginning of this Research were: 32 AI Thailand members lacking Human Capital or knowledge, skill and experience in Appreciative Inquiry. To address this challenge, the Researcher employed Action Research for eight cycles during eight months to develop AI Thailand members' Human Capital. Organization Development Interventions were implemented as: Appreciative Inquiry, Appreciative Coaching and Knowledge Management. For the outcome, Participants' Human Capital was developed. Human Capital consisted of 17 AI Champions, 12 AI Masters and 3 Apprentices. Participants were able to create impacts upon their organizations at diverse degree. 6 participants were able to create "very high" impacts to their organizations. 5 participants were able to create "high" impacts to their organizations. 10 participants were able to create "medium" impacts to their organizations. 8 participants were able to create "low" impacts to their organizations. 3 participants were able to create "very low" impacts to their organizations.

Recommendation for AI Thailand

1. There should be a follow-up Evaluation to see the sustainability of such Human Capital.

2. AI Thailand has recruited more new members over times. However, this Research had been applied for small group of 32 people. Therefore there should be another Action Research to improve organizational performance targeting larger audiences like 100 or over.

3. AI Thailand members should be promoted to develop their Community of Practices at the beginning. This might make impacts more sustainable.

4. AI Thailand should find out the ways to develop long-term AI projects like one year or more not just four months. This would help develop more sustainable AI projects.

Recommendation for Academicians

1. Academicians should develop a strategy to help participants communicate their problems and challenges. Thai people do not express their feelings straightforwardly. They always avoid talking about ‘the problem’.

2. People in organizations might already have “Human Capital” in Appreciative Inquiry. They are quite optimistic and responsive. They try to seek feedback and then to experiment new idea. These people tend to be “Change Agents” in organizations or Research Project. Academician might communicate idea and vision as well as movement to other people through such change agents. This will be helpful when developing Action Research/Appreciative Inquiry in developing Human Capital in Thai context.

Recommendation for further research

1. There should be more Action focusing more on developing Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry.

2. There should be more researches to develop more reliable measure for evaluating Human Capital in Appreciative Inquiry.

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