

*Administrative Success Factors of Private Pre - Schools in Khon Kaen Under Office
of The Private Education Commission: Multi-Cases Study*

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Abstract

The objective of this multi-case research was to study factors affecting the administration and management of Private Pre-school, in Khon Kaen Province. The representatives were selected by Purposive for 2 schools including: the North-eastern Kindergarten School, and Prakuman-jesus-wittat Khon Kaen School, under the Office of Khon Kaen Educational Service Area 1. The research methodology consisted of documentary study, observation, and interview from the school administrators and teachers as key informants. Data were analyzed by Descriptive Analysis in each aspect of conceptual framework, and investigated by using the Triangulation Technique.

The research findings found that:

- 1) The success factors of the administration and management in both of Private Pre-schools in Khon Kaen Province, were different. There were 5 success factors of the North-eastern Kindergarten School, including: the structure, the human, the work task, the technology, and the financial factors. For Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School, there were 5 success factors of the administration and management including: the structure, the human, the work task, the technology, and the environmental factors.
- 2) For success factors of the administration and management in both of Private Pre-schools in Khon Kaen Province, there were additional factors from tentative framework developed by the researcher, for instance, in the North-eastern Kindergarten School, a small sized school, there was an additional factor as the financial factor, and Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School, a large sized school, there was an additional factor as the environmental factor.

Keyword: Administrative, Success Factors, Private Pre - Schools

Background and Significance of the Problem

The quality of education was a chronic problem in Thailand. Although there was an attempt for Educational Reform for more than 10 years from the first round in 1999 to the second round in 2009, the problem still couldn't be solved. There many causes of this problem until we didn't know where should be started. In addition, some aspects of reform could make it be worse, for instance, the quality assurance was to increase document work for teachers. As a result, the teachers had less time for preparing their lessons. The Educational Quality couldn't be improved concretely. (amman Siamwala, 2012) According to data from the Office of Budget during 2003-2011, specified that Thailand increasingly allocated the Education Budget in every year. But, Thai Children's learning achievement was lower down which reflected that although each school year budget was increased, Thai Children's Educational Quality wasn't increased. (Somkiet Tangkijwanich, 2012)

The Office of Private Education Commission, was a work unit being assigned from the government to provide the Education one year before Primary school. The objective was to develop the quality Kindergarten Education by being able to produce students with readiness in their physical, mental, social, intellectual aspects as well as initiative and creative thinking to be congruent with experience development guideline, readiness before entering to Primary School, and development of correct value for the parents. (The Office of Private Education Commission, 1992) The Pre-school Educational Management was necessary for every child since it was to prepare one's early life period before studying in Primary School. This level of Education, provided for 3-5 years old children, an important period since children would have rapid development in their physical, mental, emotional, social, intellectual as well as personality. It was the age connecting from infancy period. Therefore, 3-5 years old children should be prepared their readiness in every developmental aspect in the right direction continuously in order to be important foundation in their future. (The Office of National Primary Education Commission, 1996)

One problem in recent society which had high impact on Thai Early Childhood, was the weakness of family institution in child rearing practice. A number of early childhood might receive inappropriate child rearing practice which could affect their quality of life in both of the present and future. Besides, there were different environmental problems which might affect the early childhood' health as well as development and learning. In addition, the movement of different cultures from outside, could directly and indirectly affect their livelihood. As a result, the importance of cultural identity in one's own culture had to be aware of. Consequently, child development as relevant to cultural context as well as social lifestyle which were different, was very important. (Kriengsak Roonroj, 2012)

In the environment of business implementation in Educational Institute especially the private school enterprise, it aimed to the excellence for one's own private school. Each school administrator viewed the meaning of "Excellence" and strategy leading to the excellence differently. For business in Education with high competition since the international level of Education Marketing was more enlarged and progressed for business implementation in Thailand. Technology was rapidly developed.

Furthermore, the consumers as students and their parents, wanted to received good instructional service with “high quality in reasonable price.” (Patompong Soopalerd, 2006)

The successful school management would lead to Educational Quality Development since the school would be successful, it was required development. In addition, most of successful schools, would be recognized by parents and community, and assured the school quality by different institutions from inside and outside. Consequently, the researcher was interested in studying the Success Factors of School Administration which caused the schools to be awarded. The researcher selected North-eastern Kindergarten School, Khon Kaen, a small sized private school, being recognized as the excellent instruction by receiving 3 periods of the Royal Award from His Majesty the King, in 1999, 2003, and 2007 (North-eastern Kindergarten School, 2012), and Prakuman-jesus-wittaya School, Khon Kaen, a large sized private school being awarded for 3 periods from His Majesty the King, in 2002, 2006, and 2010 from the Ministry of Education, shield award of Pre-school Educational Management with excellent quality from the Ministry of Education, Open House from the Office of Khon Kaen Educational Service Area 1, and being assured by the Office of Accreditation in Educational Standard and Quality Assessment (OAE) in 2007 school year. (Developmental Plan, Prakuman-jesus-wittaya School, 2012)

The findings of success in both schools being awarded, was caused by continuous quality development. As a result, the factor of success on the school administration and management, would have knowledge in which factor would affect both schools being selected for the award as Royal Award, in order to be able to use as guidelines for quality improvement and development, and work practice of school to be the most benefit as objective in Educational Management further.

Research Objectives

To study the Success Factors of Private Pre-school Administration and Management in Khon Kaen Province.

Research Methodology

This research was a Qualitative Research by using the Multi-Case Study in Private Pre-school.

1. The Target Group, the target group using in this study consisted of 2 private pre-schools in Khon Kaen Province, including the North Eastern Kindergarten School, under the Office of Khon Kaen Educational Service Area 1, a small sized pre-school, and Pra-kuman-jesus-wittaya School, Khon Kaen, under the Office of Khon Kaen Educational Service Area 1, a large sized pre-school. The researcher determined criterion in selecting the case study school as: to be 3 periods as the Royal School Assessment, and 2) the school passed the assessment by the Office of Accreditation and Educational Standard and Quality Assessment, in 2 rounds. The key informants were the school administrators and teachers of both schools.
2. The variables using in this study, were: 1) the structural factor, 2) the work responsibility, 3) the human factor, and 4) the technology factor.

3. **Research Instruments** - In this study, the researcher was an instrument. The other instruments for data collection were: the Interview Form, the Filed Notes, the Observation Form, and the Documentary Study.
4. **Data Collection** - The researcher collected data from both of schools by using the Participatory Observation, and Non- Participatory Observation in various school activities, and Interviewing the school administrators, teachers, and Educational Staffs. The Triangulation Technique was administered for checking validity of data.
5. **Data Analysis** - The researcher analyzed data by Descriptive Analysis in each side based on conceptual framework of the study, and presented in narrative form.

Research Findings

1. For the **Structural Factor**, both of schools organized the same 4 divisions Structural Management. But, they classified the line of command based on different class lines. For role and function determination, it was classified by teaching function, and structural function determining by the staffs' aptitude.
2. For **Human Factor**, both of schools had administrators with far and broad vision, ethics and morality, knowledge and competency in both of academic as well as administration. They were recognized by the society. The teachers had working skill and worked as a team. They had satisfaction and intention to work.
3. For **Work Responsibility**, both of schools determined teaching responsibility for classroom teachers, and other works based on structure including good administration and management, and the staffs taking care of finance, administrative work, information technology.
4. For **Technology**, both of schools had standardized building and site, the classrooms were large size sufficiently for students, the experienced plans were organized according to students and community' interest relevant to curriculum, and the students could learn and search for knowledge from real life situation.
5. The North-eastern Kindergarten School had finance factor in addition to tentative framework determined by the researcher, for developing the learning management by buying the expensive toys in playground as well as decoration for school. The environment was managed to be peaceful and livable in order to be learning origin outside classroom as well as incentive for students' parents to send the children to study.

The Prakuman-jesus- wittaya Khon Kaen School had supplementary factor in finance in addition to the tentative framework determined by the researcher. The school emphasized on the environmental climate facilitating instruction for children as well as the learning origin both of inside and outside classroom, the garden and flower were organized, the name of flower as well as motto on the tree, various learning sources were organized for students to learn based on their interest in order to enhance the students' quality.

Discussions

The researcher presented the issues to be discussed as follows:

- 1. The Structure**, Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School, ranked the order of this factor in the second one. For The North-eastern Kindergarten School, ranked it in the fourth order. Both of schools provided management into 4 divisions. But, the difference was the command based on class line. For Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School, classified by the class line could be found from document, school structure management, and Interview. For The North-eastern Kindergarten School, classified the power in taking care of learning based on instructional curriculum. It was caused by Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School was a large sized Pre-school including a large number of students. So, the decentralization into sub-power taken care by decision maker in every level for the issue could be made decision immediately. For the work needed decision making power, the conference would be held for consultation and made decision later. It was congruent with Netpanna Yawirach's (2000) statement that the decentralization in decision making into every level of administrator to have power to order as well as make decision within framework, was to lower down the high executive's responsibility. Consequently, the work management would be quick and in time. The persons were practiced for competency in decision making as well as responsibility.
- 2. The Human factor**, both of schools gave an importance to this factor in the first order. Since the administrators' characteristics were similar as the far and broad vision, ethical and morality, democratic, and recognized by people from inside and outside the organization. Furthermore, the administrators were very important persons in this factor because they had to determine the vision, policy, work plan, work management strategy, and command line to be appropriate with school context. Moreover, the findings of study in appropriate characteristic, found that the administrators' important personal characteristics, consisted of ethic, morality, human relationship, justice, vision, role model, knowledge, open-minded to listen to the others, modern, leader, generosity, enthusiasm, dedication, and good personality. For the school administrators' characteristics in work practice, the following up in work practice as well as evaluation, planning, assigning work task appropriately with the person, allowing the co-workers participate in self-development, decentralization, equality, team working, morale development, techniques usage in work management and practice, cooperation, and keeping pace with situation, should be given an importance. Besides, both of school staffs worked in team focusing on participation in expressing one's opinion. Consequently, their works were smooth and continuous. Saowanee Treputtarat's (2005) study in Factors affecting Effectiveness in using Basic Education Curriculum 2001, in Schools under Basic Education Office in North-eastern Region, found that in order to obtain effectiveness in usage of Basic Education Curriculum 2001, in the schools under the Office of Basic Education Commission, North-eastern Region, found that the effectiveness in curriculum usage, the school administrators should develop the Human Organizational Factor which was the factor influenced the most influence both of directly and indirectly.

- 3. The Work Responsibility**, both of schools gave an importance to this factor in the third order, the teachers' work was the classroom teachers who had to closely take care of their students throughout the time, be able to communicate with students' parents when the problems occurred, record each student's performance as well as development. As a result, the teachers would understand as well as have information of their children. So, they could be able to help each aspect their students' development. In addition, both of schools organized similar management system by classifying the division to work for being convenient and quick as well as efficient working. It was supported by Saowanee Treputtarat' study in Factors affecting Effectiveness in using Basic Education Curriculum 2001, in Schools under Basic Education Office in North-eastern Region, found that both of small sized school, and medium sized school had to not only develop the Human Factor in the first order, but also develop the Organizational Work Responsibility in aligned with Technology simultaneously.
- 4. The Technology Factor**, The North-eastern Kindergarten School ranked the importance of this factor in the second order. For Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School, ranked this factor in the fourth order. Since The North-eastern Kindergarten School had policy in supporting the staffs to focus on using technology in work for being convenience and quick following new determined identity as "Good Knowledge, Be Ethical, and Leading the Technology." Furthermore, the library was large including modern learning media to be searched by students during their free time or library hour. Consequently, the students were knowledgeable, practiced analytical thinking based on their interest. According to the researcher's observation, found that there was no library in Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School. According to the interview, found that the school had policy for students to participate in activities for the whole school in vertical line as : every student in every class, had to bring each one's favorite book, a book/month. The shared reading activity was organized at the Learning Park so that the students would learn how to share as well as be unity, develop good climate in organization. The class as well. It was congruent with Somkid Soinam's (2004) study in Development of Learning Organization Model in Secondary School, the findings found that the factor in Technology and Work System, the average value of teaching variable in different divisions indicated that the Technology Factor especially the computer as well as modern material and equipment, most of school wasn't ready in this aspect. It might be due to the budget being allocated in each school, was received from budget for each student by the government. So, it wasn't sufficient for buying them based on the users' need.
- 5. The Financial Factor**, was the factor from the researcher's framework. This finding obtained from The North-eastern Kindergarten School because the school administrators wanted to develop their school to be a leading one. So, they searched for budget to support the school development including: buying the modern media for instructional development, the safe equipment, technology, and toy in order to decrease the risk in being dangerous for students. Moreover, there was an investment in decorating the surrounding climate in school to be Learning Origin outside the classroom. These findings were obtained from the interview and observation by the researcher.

6. **The Environmental Factor**, was an additional factor from the framework that the researcher obtained from Prakuman-jesus-wittaya Khon Kaen School. The school organized the environmental climate facilitating the students' learning and teaching as well as Learning Origin by managing the environmental condition to be serene and proper. In front of the building, there were lotus pool as well as flowers being grown beautifully. Because the administrators gave an importance to the environment since the appropriate environmental management would enhance the early childhood' learning when the environment both of inside and outside classroom had to be organized to be clean, safe, opened, and closed to the nature.

Recommendations from the study

1. Recommendations for using the findings of this study

1. The administrators should give an importance to human development factor as the first priority. Since the research findings found that this factor was important which could affect the success in teachers' satisfaction as well as students' learning.
2. The large sized school administrators should develop other factors in aligned with the environmental factor.

2. Recommendations for future research

1. The study in comparison between private school, and public school, should be conducted in order to study factor of success in different contexts.
2. The study in this issue should be conducted in Primary School, Secondary School, and Higher Education, should be conducted in order to use the findings in studying the similarity and differences in different class levels, and assure the findings in case of similar findings. On the contrary, for different findings, the cause of differences would be known.

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