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Relationship between Strategic Leadership and School Effectiveness

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Abstract

The strategic leadership is an ideal type of administrative personnel. The schools under the Municipality are the function of decentralization in Thailand which was just recently implemented. The objectives of this study were to study: 1) the level/s of strategic leadership 2) the level/s of effectiveness in the school and 3) the relationship between strategic leadership performance on school effectiveness. The samples consisted of 32 school leaders and 217 teachers from 11 schools under the municipality of Khon Kaen. The research instrument was a set of five-rating scale questionnaire. Descriptive data analysis were employed using SPSS. The Multiple Correlation Analysis and a test for multi-collinearity correlation analysis of independent variables were also utilized. The results indicated that the level of strategic leadership was ranked at a high level. When considering at different functions, the mean scores showed from high to low level as: strategic implementation, monitoring and evaluation, organization culture, and the specification of strategy respectively. The level of school effectiveness also ranked at a high level with mean scores in each aspect from high to low as: students' characteristics, satisfaction of teachers' performance, school change and development, school climate and environment, and students' achievement respectively.

Regarding the relationship between strategic leadership and school effectiveness, there was a positive correlation at a medium level with statistically significant difference at 0.01 level and the multiple regression indicated $r=0.721$ with the prediction power 52.0 percent ($r^2=0.520$).

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Keywords: Strategic leadership, schools effectiveness.

1. Introduction

From the situation of educational change amidst globalization which consists of complexity and diversity from the revolution of information technology, education greatly causes the rapid change in the society. Education takes a key role in the development process of the country. The educational reform has implemented in order to promote quality of education. The aim of educational reform is to develop a whole system in various aspects. Thus man power is an important factor for development (Sutep, 2005). The manpower is the most valuable resource of the country. However the quality of human resource depends upon the effectiveness of education of the government. The administrator in the current period needs to adopt a style of “Strategic Leadership” This leadership style would lead to the progress of the organization. Many leaders who lead their organizations successfully use strategic leadership. The characteristics of strategic leadership include having wide vision and taking such vision into practice (Dess & Miller, 1993) The administrator has to practice strategic leadership. He has to change his way of thinking and accept a new style of administration which corresponds to change. He has to attempt to set a perfect strategic plan and cover all aspects of an educational institute. This change would lead to the implementation of management procedures especially the application of strategic plan into practice in the organization such as the structural organization, organization culture, information technology, human resources as well as strategic for monitoring and evaluation. All of the mentioned procedures would be integrated into a “strategic” management .The high working leader of the organization or the administrator is a person at a strategic level which has a direct responsibility in strategic plan management in every step. It can be concluded that strategic management consists of three main steps: 1) Strategic formulation 2) Strategic implementation and 3) Strategic control and evaluation (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996).

2. Problem Statement

The office of Education in the municipality of Khon Kaen has implemented various strategies to promote quality and effectiveness of the administrators. These strategies were aimed to encourage the administrators to develop themselves and change their administrative management so it corresponds to change and educational reform. The municipality offices are aware that the school administrators are the one who implement policy into practice. The schools under the Office of the Municipality provide “lead education”. The administrators, therefore have to view the management in various aspects. They have to consider a national Education policy as well as the policy of promoting the department of local Administration which is the lead quarter of the Office of the municipality and the municipality office plan (Supervision Unit, Khon Kaen Municipality, 2010). The important issue for the current administrators is that they have to change and have strategies in their management as well as leadership style in strategic management. With all of these characteristics, the administrators should be able to move their organization towards the specified goals effectively and efficiently. (Department of Academic, 2003)

With the abovementioned situations and problems, the researcher got interested to study a research regarding the relationship between strategic leadership and school effectiveness of school administrators under Khon Kaen municipality office; Thailand. The obtained knowledge would serve as a key information for the improvement of strategic leadership that will give development to school administrators under the Municipality Office of Khon Kaen in Thailand.

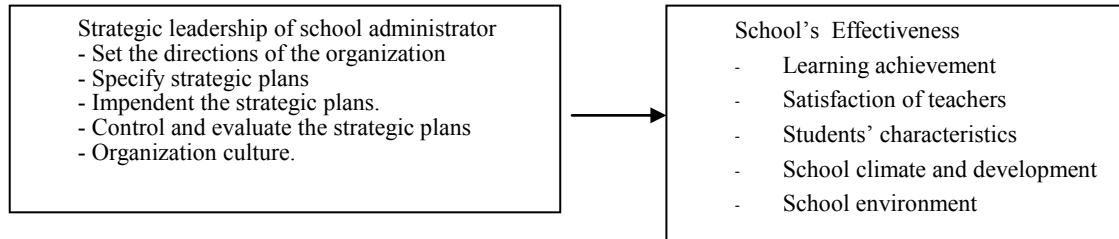
3. Research Objectives

The following are the objectives used in this study:

1. To study the levels of strategic leadership of school administrators;
2. To study the levels of school efficiency under the municipality office; and
3. To study the relationship between strategic leadership performance and the effectiveness of the schools under the Office of the Municipality.

4. Conceptual Framework

The researchers designed a conceptual framework of the study (Dess, G.G. & Miller, A. (1993; Finkelstein & Hambrick,1996 & Saowanee,2003). To wit:



5. Methodology

This study is a co-relational type of research. The populations were the school administrators and 50 teachers from eleven schools which were totaled to 533. The samples comprised of 30 school leaders and 217 school teachers which was summed to 249. The samples were drawn from Krejcei Mogan Simple Random Sampling.

6. Research Instruments

The research used a set of 5–rating scale questionnaire. Descriptive data analysis were employed using SPSS. It also used the multiple correlation analysis as well as a test for multi – collinearity correlation for the analysis of independent variables.

7. Findings

The level of strategic leadership was ranked at high level. When considering at individual aspects, it was found that the implementation of strategic leadership yielded the highest average score and at the aspect of “set the directions for the organization” yielded the lowest mean score.

In the effectiveness of schools under municipality Office of Khon Kaen, it was ranked at a high level. When considering the individual aspect, it was found that students' characteristics showed the highest average score while the students' learning achievement showed the lowest average score. Also, the students learning achievement showed the lowest average score.

Relationship between strategic leadership performance on the effectiveness of schools under the municipality Office of Khon Kaen, it was found that there was a positive correlation at a medium level in all of the five aspects of strategic leadership and can predict the school's effectiveness at 52.0 percent ($r = 0.520$)

8. Discussion

8.1 The school administration should adopt and use the strategic leadership style by implementing the strategic plan into practice in consonance with the policy of the Ministry of Education. The policy required all

schools to set strategic plans and their visions and then implement. The two outcomes of the implementation have to be reported continuously. This practice was also seen agreed with Davies (2003) who studied the development of strategic leadership which found that the important characteristics of the leader were capable of visualizing the future, implement strategic plans into practice and teamwork development.

8.2 With regard to school effectiveness, it was revealed that schools had emphasized on students characteristics development. It was evidenced that the administrators gave the priority to the plans or projects for students' development according to the curriculum requirement. The characteristics included having good attitude towards learning, being "learning" persons, having life skills and having moral and ethics. All these characteristics were also required by the National Policy especially the characteristics of learners in the ASEAN community.

9. Recommendations from the study

9.1 The Educational Service Area Office should hold the breakthrough workshop by brainstorming so that the administrators would obtain knowledge and comprehension in process for establishing the strategies, and practicing in school under control and support continuously.

9.2 This study was restricted the respondents by the choices in questionnaires. It will be better if the researcher extend the questions for qualitative data. Then, the results from this research should be developed by using some principles of action research or research and development to be the program for enhancing strategic leadership of school principals and compared with the principals in another areas.

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