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Causal Relationship Model of the Factors That Affect the Effectiveness of Sub-District Good Schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office

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Abstract:
The purpose of this research was to 1) study the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, 2) create a linear structural relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, and 3) examine the consistency of the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office. The samples were obtained by stratified random sampling based on the provinces of schools followed by simple random sampling (lottery) and included 302 teachers. The model consisted of six variables: transformational leadership, school atmosphere, teaching and learning management, community participation, school culture, and school effectiveness. Data were analyzed by computer software. The research found that the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office was consistent with empirical data. Chi - square value (x^2) was 416.80, x^2/df was 3.04, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) was 0.98, adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) was 0.96, comparative fit index (CFI) was 0.99, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.078, and most of which were in line with the criteria. Five causal factors used in this study included transformational leadership (LSCha), school atmosphere(Sch At), teaching and learning management (Learn), community participation ((ComLn), and school culture(SchCu), and could jointly explain the variance or predict the effectiveness of these schools at 66 percent.

Keywords: Policy of sub-district good schools, factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools

1. Introduction

Globalization is an era of change where every person and organization must encounter with rapid social, political, economic, cultural, information, technological, educational, and environmental change, and all of which contribute to the development of the country. In the development of the country, people must be developed first and then provided with knowledge to develop their country. According to the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), one of the main causes of the problem on quality of education in Thailand is that the current Thai education is not consistent with the development of the 21st century skills so the learning and teaching, including the exam, continue to focus on content rather than on learning to have real knowledge and understanding, which negatively affects the quality of students. (Ministry of Education, 2015:1). Since the Ministry of Education has recognized the importance of working under the framework of educational development and reform in the second decade and the policy of educational quality development through distance learning based on the principles of quality development, opportunity extension, reduction of educational disparities, and participation, the "Sub-district good schools" project has been launched and intended to make rural schools in the sub-district level as "quality schools" with academic readiness and strength, student development activities, health development, occupational learning, and community service activities, and in 2016, 129 schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office were selected to join this project. The management by the government agencies mainly takes into account the efficiency and effectiveness of these schools. The schools can survive if they are successful in achieving their goals and the effectiveness is used as their indicator (Boonlur Thataisong, 2014: 2). In addition, the effectiveness of the schools is also important for the development of education in the country and affects the educational management of the schools.

Therefore, the researchers were interested in studying how to administrate the schools effectively by synthesizing different factors. According to the literature review, the important factors that affect the effectiveness of the schools were used as a conceptual framework to examine the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office. This study can lead to the development of educational quality and can serve as important information for sustainable administration of sub-district good schools.

2. Methodology

2.1. Population and Samples

The population was 1,369 teachers who were teaching in the sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office during the academic year 2016.

The samples included 302 teachers who were teaching in the sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office during the academic year 2016. The sample size was determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan table of sampling (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970: 607 - 610) followed by *stratified random sampling based on the* provinces of schools and simple *random sampling* (lottery).

2.2. Research Instrument

The research instrument was a questionnaire to inquire the teachers' opinions on the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office and was divided into 2 sections: 1) a checklist of general information of the respondents, including gender, age , educational background, teaching experience, and school size, and 2) a questionnaire to inquire the teachers' opinions on the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office that is divided into six sections: (1) transformational leadership of school administrators, (2) school atmosphere, (3) teaching and learning management, (4) community participation, (5) school culture, and (6) school effectiveness.

3. Data Collection

Data collection in this study was conducted as follows:
- A letter was obtained from the Graduate School of Thaksin University for support in collecting data from the samples.
- A questionnaire and a letter of cooperation from the Graduate School of Thaksin University were sent by mail to the sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office.
- The return of the questionnaires from the samples was checked based on the specified period. The number of returned questionnaires was 292 or 96.69 percent.

3.1. Data Analysis and Statistics Used in Data Analysis

Data analysis used in this study was divided into three phases: basic data analysis, analysis to examine the quality of data, and analysis to examine the research hypotheses, which include 1) general data analysis of the respondents, 2) basic data analysis of the observed variables by analyzing the mean ($\overline{X}$), standard deviation (SD), coefficient of variation (C.V.), skewness, and kurtosis by computer software, 3) analysis of the relationship between the observed variables by analyzing the Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient, and 4) confirmatory factor analysis by LISREL 8.72 software to examine the consistency between the model and the empirical data.

4. Conclusions and Discussion

4.1. Conclusion

The results of this research on the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office can be concluded as follows:
- Considering the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, there were five latent variables: transformational leadership, school atmosphere, teaching and learning management, community participation, and school culture, and there were twenty observed latent variables: inspiration, intellectual stimulation, celebrity, personal relationship, structure, working standard, physical environment, teacher curriculum, teaching and learning activities, participation in planning, participation in operation, participation in benefit, participation in evaluation, authorization, honesty, trust, adaptation, input, process, and output.
- For the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, Chi - square value (x^2) was 416.80 with the P-value of 0.000, which was statistically significant. As x^2/df was 3.04, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) was 0.98, adjusted goodness-of-fit index (A*GFI*) was 0.96, comparative fit index (*CFI*) was 0.99, and root mean square error of approximation

(RMSEA) was 0.078, and most of which were in line with the criteria, it therefore means that this causal relationship model was consistent with empirical data.

- According to the examination, the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office was consistent with empirical data and all variables influenced the effectiveness of these schools. Teaching and learning management (Learn) had the highest influence coefficient of 0.97, followed by school atmosphere (SchAt) of 0.91, community participation (ComLn) of 0.86, transformational leadership (LSCha) of 0.53, and school culture (SchCu) of 0.18, respectively. In addition, there were five factors influencing directly the effectiveness of these schools, i.e. teaching and learning management (Learn) had the highest influence coefficient of 0.97, followed by school atmosphere (SchAt) of 0.56, community participation (ComLn) of 0.32, transformational leadership (LSCha) of 0.24, and school culture (SchCu) of 0.18, respectively.

Moreover, there were three factors influencing indirectly the effectiveness of these schools, i.e. transformational leadership (LSCha) had the highest influence coefficient of 0.77, followed by community participation (ComLn) of 0.54, and school atmosphere (SchAt) of 0.35, respectively.

This causal relationship model mostly met the criteria and was therefore consistent with empirical data as shown in the following diagram:
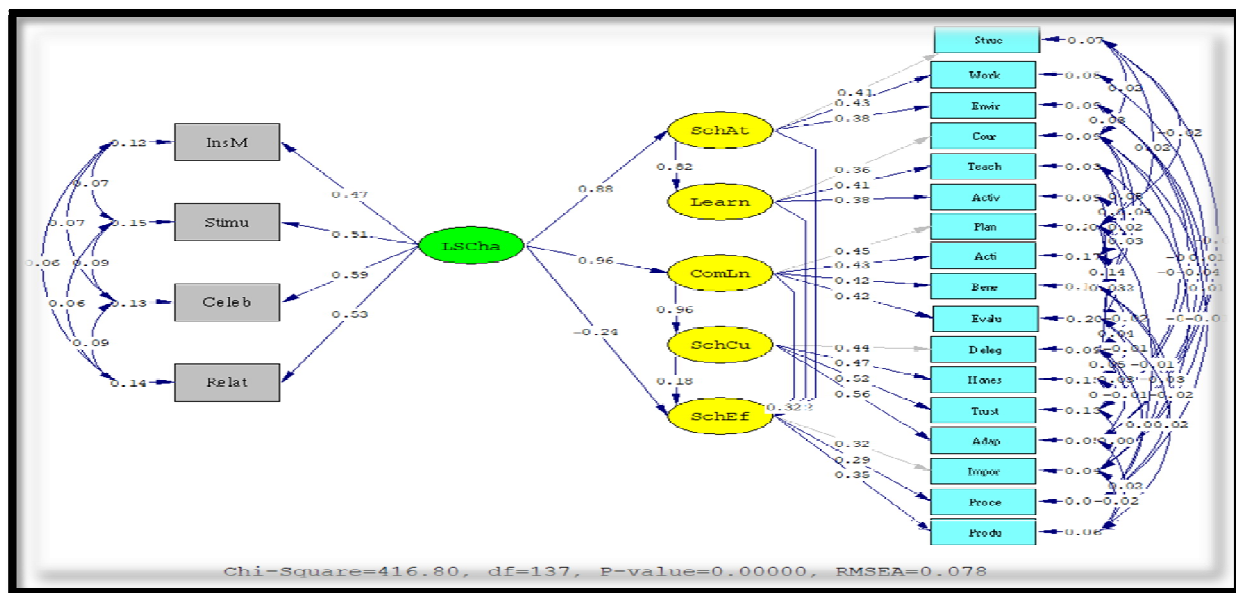

Figure 1

4.2. Discussion

According to the study on the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, it was found that:

- Teaching and learning management (Learn) was the first most important variable of these schools and was indirectly influenced by transformational leadership (LS Cha). From this finding, it indicates that teaching and learning management (Learn) is an important variable possibly because the teaching and learning management of these schools mainly focus on the students, various teaching methods, intellectual development, and literacy as basic skills that all students must have. Therefore, an effective teaching and learning management rely on curriculums, teachers, and teaching and learning activities to make the schools effective. This is consistent with Raynold (Raynold, 1998: 50) who investigated the key components of effective teaching and learning management in the UK by examining the characteristics of the teachers and the important elements of the effective schools and found that teachers should use a variety of teaching materials, allow their students to participate in various activities, and conduct challenging teaching and learning management.
- School atmosphere (SchAt) was the second most important variable of these schools and was directly influenced by transformational leadership (LSCha) and teaching and learning management (Learn). This is in line with Litwin and Strinher (Litwin and Strinher,1968:   65) who suggested that school atmosphere is an important variable in investigating the schools and linking between the school's visible aspects, such as school structure, rules, and leadership style, and the behavior of school personnel. In addition, school atmosphere represents the sense of its personnel towards the school's visible aspects and determines the behavior and attitude of its personnel.

- Community participation (Com Ln) was the third most important variable of these schools and was directly influenced by transformational leadership (LSC ha) and school culture (SchCu) possibly because the policy of these schools focuses on the principles of quality development, opportunity extension, reduction of educational disparities, community participation in educational management, and continuous and effective activities to provide services and link between the schools and the community. Therefore, participatory actions can help make the school operations more effective. This is consistent with Kridsada Sarakarn (2012: 128) who investigated the community participation patterns in the administration of the sub-district good schools, a case study on Sang Tor Samakkee Community School under the Ubonratchathani Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, and found that community participation is a dynamic process where it is regularly changed and everyone jointly solves the problems and makes new plans to build a sustainable relationship and participation of all parties.

- Transformational leadership (LSCha) was the fourth most important variable of these schools with celebrity (Celeb) as its first important element possibly because the school administrators show their ideology, values, management confidence, morality, ethics, friendship with teachers and personnel, good model, broad vision, creativity, technology update, and effective school management into new directions. Successful administrators must be ready to be the leader of change or have transformational leadership. This is consistent with Wannapa Jansri (2010: 67-68) who studied the transformational leadership of school administrators under the Chachoengsao Provincial Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education and found that the variable of celebrity was at a high level possibly because school administrators are required to show the teachers their ideology, values, beliefs, working confidence, and importance given on shared missions in school administration so that teachers believe in the ability of these school administrators.

- School culture (SchCu) was the fifth most important variable of these schools and was indirectly influenced by transformational leadership (LSCha) possibly because the behavior and actions are based on school administrator's values and beliefs as seen by the behavior of teachers and personnel. This is consistent with Kanyapat Songsri(2012: 87) who examined the patterns of organizational culture in basic schools located in Pathumrat District under the Roi-et Primary Educational Service Area Office 2 and found that teachers and school administrators understand that organizational culture is what teachers and personnel have based on their same actions, beliefs, respects, values, feelings, and routines. With the same understanding of organizational culture, the members of the organization understand their common practices and behavior in groups, which affects the uniqueness and strength of their own organization.

In addition, considering this causal relationship model, it was found that the effectiveness of the sub-district good schools had the important elements as follows: 1) input(Impor), 2) process (Proce), and 3) output (Produ), respectively. This is because all sectors in society today, whether it is a community, local administrative organization, or a basic school board, expect that schools in rural areas are developed as a quality school that is well prepared and strengthened in terms of academic, occupational and health well-beingin order to achieve their specified goals and be accepted by parents or community to send their children to attend. The schools are assessed to develop and assess themselves once per semester as well as are supervised, monitored and assisted for their self-development according to the relevant standards and indicators in order to get prepared for an evaluation from their superior agencies once a year. This consistent with Kasamaporn Thong-ur (2012: 18) who suggested that the measurement of school effectiveness focuses on the school's goals that are directly related to the effectiveness and on the systematic evaluation criteria based on three factors: 1) support factors include school philosophy and policy and leadership of school administrators, 2) process factors include teaching and learning management, efficient allocation of resources, and organization's learning ability, and 3) output factors include student achievement, teacher and personnel satisfaction, and relationship between teachers and students.

5. Suggestions

5.1. Implications

This study on the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office was aimed at 1) studying the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, 2) creating a linear structural relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office, and 3) examining the consistency of the causal relationship model of the factors that affect the effectiveness of sub-district good schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office. The results provide useful information that can be applied in educational planning and improvement of educational management. In addition, it can lead to the establishment of a policy to drive and enhance the quality of education and to guide the sub-district good schools to develop their sustainable quality and effectiveness. The suggestions are as follows:

The administration of schools under the Southern Region Primary Educational Service Area Office needs to focus on the factors that affect the effectiveness of school administration, which include transformational leadership, school atmosphere, teaching and learning management, community participation, and school culture, respectively, because these factors are key variables that make the school administration more effective.

The key variables that school administrators should focus on in managing their schools effectively include celebrity, working standard, teachers, participation in planning, and trust, which affect school administrator's ability to manage and solve problems in order to lead their schools to the success and effectiveness.

5.2. Recommendations for Future Research
- Since this study was conducted only with primary schools in the southern provinces, the next research should be conducted with different samples in terms of their educational background and regional locations, and with additional variables that may affect the effectiveness of the schools.
- After this study was quantitatively conducted, it should also be qualitatively conducted on a case-by-case basis to make the research results more effective.

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