

Educational Management Model for Child Development Centers under Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to examine educational management in child development centers of local administrative organizations in Nangrong District Buriram Province; 2) to create the model of educational management in child development centers and 3) to evaluate the created model. The sample consisted of 122 informants. This research tool was a questionnaire with three parts: checklist, rating scales, and open-ended questions. The statistics employed in this research were percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The research results revealed that the model of educational management in child development centers under the aforementioned organization was overall found at a high level. Moreover, the administration of the child development centers was ranked first and was followed by the following aspects: participation and support of all sectors, promotion of early childhood development networks, academic affairs and curriculum-based activities, buildings, environment and safety, personnel respectively. In addition, the developed model consisted of five components i.e., rationale, objectives, contents, process, and measurement and evaluation.

Keywords: Educational Management, Child Development Centers, Local Administrative Organizations

1. Introduction

Thailand is a developing country which intensively develops human resources in order to reinforce in the country's development. According to the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2007-2011), the human and social development strategy of Thailand is a society of wisdom and learning. The essential developing method is to create and develop children to be ready in every aspect (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2006) especially newborn to five-year old children. These periods are good opportunities for learning because the brain is fast growing and all human developments including physical, emotional, mental, social, and intelligent aspects were completely settled (Piphat Punyajong, 2007:1). The Local Administrative Organizations have to take responsibility in early childhood education (3-5 years) by establishing a child development center. Therefore, all child development centers must comply with five educational guidance: 1) promoting learning procedures and development which covers all types of early childhood, 2) holding to a principle by realizing the differences between each child and daily life according to Thai community, social, and cultural contexts, 3) applying holistic development through playing and suitable activities, 4) creating learning experiences that help children live their lives effectively and happily, 5) coordinating collaboration between families,

communities, and educational institutions in developing children (Department of Local Administration, 2001:5).

Most educational institutions affiliated with Local Administrative Organizations were standardized in factors at good to excellent levels while the standard of learners was low compared with the factors used in educational management. Overall, the vital problems were : child care providers were not enthusiastic in taking care of children, classrooms and bedrooms were not clean as expected, a lack of self-development, a developing landscape, environmental problems, and food preparing problems, etc. (Somchok Gangrum, 2006:85). Most child development centers were rather old and run down. Children developing equipment such as toys, and story books were in short supply. The number of child care providers was low and disproportionate with the number of children. There was no bedding or canteen. As mentioned above, the standard of most child development centers was at the bottom level and needed improvement. The aspects that did not reach the primary standard were health promotion, child development promotion, food, environment, personnel, and cooperation from every sector, etc. (Department Of Local Administration, 2004:1-28). The standards in operating child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations can be divided into six aspects: a standard of child development center administration, a standard of personnel, a standard of workplace, environment, and safety, a standard of academic and curricular activities, a standard of cooperation and support from every sector, and a standard of promotion of child development networks. These standards act as guidance in operating the child development centers (Local Administration Office, 2002:3).

As a result, the researchers as the institute administrators affiliated with Local Administrative Organizations responsible for supporting child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations were interested in studying educational management models in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province. The results of this study could be applied as a guideline in increasing efficiency of child development centers' operations and used as information resources in planning educational development of Local Administrative Organizations.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To study educational management in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province.
2. To create a child development educational model of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province.
3. To evaluate the model in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province.

3. Research Methodology

The population and samples of this study were as follows : In phase 1, the researchers studied related research on educational management in child development centers in Nangrong District, Buriram Province. The samples were 122 people from stratified random sampling with the criterion of 25% of population (Boonchom Srisart, 2002:41). For phase 2, the validity and consistency of the educational management model in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province were verified. In phase 3, the educational management

model of child development centers was evaluated, and validated its suitability and possibility by seven educators.

3.1 Data Collection tools

The data collection tools were divided into three phases. Phase 1 was the study and construction of the model. The data collection tools used in the study was a five-rating scale questionnaire. The questionnaire was created by covering all six main points of the operations in child development centers and the suitability and correctness of the items was verified by the researchers' advisor. After that, its validity was verified and added comments by five educators were added. The content validity of the questionnaire was between 0.80-1.00. Next, the edited questionnaire was tried out with 30 related persons in a child development field but not the samples. The reliability of the questionnaire was at 0.84 analyzed by using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (Boonchom Srisa-art, 2000: 96). For Phase 2: creation and evaluation of the model, the draft of educational management model of child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations was criticized by seven educators. In Phase 3, the educational management model of child development centers was evaluated, its suitability and possibility according to educators' remarks were validated.

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures were divided into three phases. Phase 1 was concerned with reviewing documents, ideas, principles, theories, and research. The procedures were 1) the researchers sent 122 questionnaires to the sample site, and 2) the returned questionnaires were examined for completeness in order to complete the analytical statistics. Phase 2 was the creation and development of the educational management model in child development centers. The model was inspected by 1) sending the draft of the model to seven educators and using the questionnaire by analyzing the statistics which included mean and standard deviation (SD). Phase 3 was the evaluation of the suitability and possibility of the model by using a five-rating scale questionnaire.

3.3 Data Analysis

The statistical program package was applied to analyze the data. Phase 1 related to the opinions in educational management in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations. The samples were related officers in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations. Mean and standard deviation were analyzed in each item, factors, and of the entire questionnaire. Phase 2 was the creation and development of the model. The samples were related officers in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations.

3.4 Research Results

The results of the study were as follows.

1) For educational management in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province, the problems found were: the shortage of administration funds, parents lack of knowledge and understanding of teachers' practices, teachers taking care of children had not been trained, and updated in related curriculum constantly, and a lack of learning exchange to help improve educational management in child development centers

Table 1
Results of educational management in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province in six aspects

	Lists of Operation	Level of Operation		
		\bar{X}	S.D.	Translation
1.	Child development center's administration aspect	4.17	0.52	High
2.	Personnel aspect	4.00	0.46	High
3.	Workplace, environment, and safety aspect	4.01	0.49	High
4.	Academic and curricular activities aspect	4.14	0.47	High
5.	Cooperation and supportive from every sector aspect	4.16	0.47	High
6.	Promotion of childhood development network aspect	4.16	0.40	High
	Average	4.11	0.46	High

From Table 1, it was found that the average results of educational management in child development centers of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province in every aspects was at high level ($\bar{X} = 4.11$) ranging from high to low practices as follows: child development center's administration aspect ($\bar{X} = 4.17$), promotion of childhood development network aspect ($\bar{X} = 4.16$), academic and curricular activities aspect ($\bar{X} = 4.14$), workplace, environment, and safety aspect, and personnel aspect ($\bar{X} = 4.00$).

2) The creation and development of educational management model in child development centers consisted of five compositions: principle of the model, objectives, contents in management, procedures of the model, and development of educational management. The educators criticized and compared the model with three child development centers. It was found that in administration aspects, the developed model of educational management had services of child care training, learning experience, and promoting children's development between 2-4 years by equipping children with four aspects of development. In a personnel aspect, children were promoted in their learning in order to improve their mental, emotional, social, and ethical aspects. In workplace, environment, and safety aspect, parents cleaned their own mattresses, and there was enough natural light in the building. In academic and curricular activities aspect, the center curricula were designed by applying the Department of Local Administration's curricula regulated according to contexts and community's needs. In cooperation and support from every sector aspect, the child development centers had advertised the information to the community. In the promotion of a childhood development network, the child development centers held the meetings for the head of the centers, teacher assistants, and child care providers by having local organizations joined as network committees.

3) The educational management model in child development center of Local Administrative Organizations in Nangrong District, Buriram Province was evaluated and its suitability and possibility was verified by educators. The suitability of the

handbook was very high ($\bar{X} = 4.60$) and the possibility of the model was at the highest possibility ($\bar{X} = 4.62$).

4. Discussion

From the summary of the results of the study, the level of operations in six aspects of educational management in child development centers was at a high level. This might be because of the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2550 that legislated quality development of education in Part 5, Directive Principles of Fundamental State Policies, that all persons have equal rights in education for at least 12 years from government. The quality and standard development in every level of education was focused in accordance with economic and social changes. The main educational law legislated that local administration had the rights to provide education in any levels according to readiness, suitability, and needs of people in the community (Office of the Council of State, 2009). As a result, every local administrative organization must hasten the operations in quality development of child development centers.

For child development centers' administration aspect, the results indicated that the operation in child development centers had complied with policies, plans, rules and regulations that were approved by the committee of the centers. This operation was higher practiced more than others because it was educational services for childhood in specific areas or communities preparing students for compulsory education. The researchers realized the benefits of this operation which were the cooperation from stakeholders as the child development center's committee that was involved in imposing plans, rules and regulations, and participating in sharing ideas and agreeing or disagreeing with the educational policies regulated by MueangYao Sub-district Municipality in order to comply with contexts, and intentions of local people. As a consequence, people in the community could integrate their living with the changing society for their future and the nation.

The results found the recruitment of personnel in each position was conformed to qualifications and criteria regulated by the local administration. This operation was higher than others. The researcher realized that finding qualified officers, and putting the right man/woman to the right job, was very significant in child development centers to achieve centers' goal leading to childhood education development in local administration. Importantly, children in the center will receive appropriate development according to their potential. The result was in line with Thanapon Donchuanchom's study (1979:117-118) in child development centers' guidelines of KongKhak Sub-district Administrative Organization, Mae Jam District, Chiang Mai Province. He found that the administration of the center should be obviously divided so the officers could be responsible for their job thoroughly.

For workplace, environment, and safety, the findings indicated that the environment around buildings was suitable and the areas were clearly separated. This operation was lower than others. It reflected building problems of child development centers at present. The buildings were old and damaged. There was no budget for constructing permanent buildings. Moreover, the center lacked facilities for children. These problems affected children's development in physical, mental, social, and intelligent aspects. The result was complied with Krittima Thainum's study (2010:14-17). It was found that stability, hygiene, safety, and support of health and

child development were initially considered in constructing or renovating buildings, and surrounding environment both inside and outside.

For academic and curricula activities, the results showed low practices in children learning through hand-on experiences with five senses. The researchers found that the child development center lacked learning materials for children, and teachers and child care providers did not have knowledge and understanding in developing learning materials. If teachers had the ability in learning management, children will receive high intelligence development. It was in line with Piaget's theory of cognitive development (cited in Sirima Punyoanuntapong, 2007:55) that humans had the inborn ability to learn through adjustment with the environment. This ability was adaptation which was constructed according to scheme by directly interacting with two environments: assimilation and accommodation. This ability was an important part of brain structure. Additionally, Piaget emphasized that learning would occur when children interacted with friends and adults. This influenced children's learning management by allowing them to play, survey, experiment, and solve problems by themselves. When the interaction of assimilation and accommodation balanced (Equilibration), the balance between old and new perception and interaction with pre-existing knowledge, the process of thinking and understanding had been transformed. If teachers formed effective learning management, children would better develop their intelligence correspondingly.

For cooperation and support from every sector as the results indicated that the child development centers lacked informing parents about the results of children's evaluation in every step. Only once per semester were parents informed so they received late information about their children. Furthermore, there was misunderstanding about in for the children evaluation's results. The cause might be from a lack of announcement of the responsibility of each sector. This complied with Sumthima Kanunthong's study (2009:125) that indicated a low support from the community. All decision making depended on the administrators who designated rules and regulations, and parents had little participation in learning management. The results were also in line with Department of Local Administration (2001:10) that the Local Administrative Organizations should clarify guidelines and operation plans in educational development in order to acquire the same understanding leading to cooperation from every sector. These problems, if not solved, would affect the operations of child development centers. Therefore, related organizations responsible for childhood education should provide opportunity for communities and parents to take part in regulating verifiable policies.

For the promotion of childhood development networks, the findings revealed lower operation in appointing suitable committees of educational management of child development centers. The cause of this problem was each network's representative repeated to an individual and organization. As a result, the network committee was always the same groups and organizations leading to no encouragement and sharing ideas in working from teachers and child care providers. This result did not conformed to the operation standard of child development centers of local administration (2010:58). The standard indicated that heads of the centers, teachers, child care providers, administrators, and related persons of Local Administrative Organizations should build up networks to develop children in every level including sub-district, district, province, and regional level. The objectives were establishing child development centers as learning sources in child development in order to create

potential networks, and offering opportunity for everyone to participate in developing children according to their potential.

5. Recommendations

1. Policies of cooperation in educational management from communities should be established such as advertisement in creating understanding, acceptable guidance and opinions from communities in order to identify needs, create development plans, and solve the problems in a concrete way.

1.2 Teachers and child care providers should be trained and developed constantly by supporting efficient budgets in training. The follow-up evaluation in training should be formed so that the trained teachers and child care providers could apply their knowledge in the workplace and children will gain the highest advantages.

1.3 For further studies, a comparison and analysis of learning management based on local curriculum added from in-class learning management should be studied.

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