

A Study of Need Assessment to Improving Quality of Child Development Center's Management Under the Local Administrative Organization in the Northeast, Thailand

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to (1) study the needs of child development center, local administrative organizations in Northeast, and (2) design and evaluate the guidelines of child development center's management. The research is quantitative research, which was divided into 2 phases: the first phase was to survey the current conditions, desirable conditions, and analysis of needs and the second phase was to design and evaluate the guidelines of child development center's management. The sample population was 354 people of subdistrict administrative organization's administrators, Director of Department of Education, teachers at child development center, local administrative organization, northeast. The sampling method was multistage sampling. And the tool that was used was reliability questionnaire. For the current condition it was at 0.98. The desirable situation was at 0.96. The data analysis process used percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Priority Need Index (PNI_{modified}). It was found that 1) The current condition of the management at the child development center was in low level while the desirable condition was in high level. Once needs were considered individually it was found that the highest index was building, environment, and safety, including participation and support from every sector. 2) The guideline for the management at child development center was divided into 5 perspectives of 15 practices. And the evaluation of the guideline indicated appropriateness and possibility were at a high level.

Keywords: the study of needs, management for increasing efficiency, child development center's work process

1. Introduction

Education plays an important role towards Thai people's abilities, for them to have skills, knowledge, ability and competency that are in alignment with job market requirement and national development so that Thai people can have more quality. Therefore, education was put in focus, especially childhood education. Because it is the starting point of person's development. And to develop a child is an important fundamental for other abilities in life (Utoomporn Somsri, 2017) Thai government has been continuously focusing on childhood development because it is the time that is most worth the cost for building life foundation. There are Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Education to be core agencies (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2013). Children are national force as being said that children today are adults in the future. To develop children to have quality, is the insurance that guarantees quality future of people in the country. Many organizations have been focusing more and more on childhood development. Moreover, the awakening of the knowledge stating that the brain will be improved the most for children before birth to 6 years, which means during that time it is crucial to implement development (Office of the Education Council, 2009) The learning process requires contribution from all actors, including the administration of the educational institution, teaching staff, student body, and assisting staff (Alyahya & Aldausari, 2021). It is also crucial to implement participative management with the principles are enshrined in regulatory documents of the educational institution. The best students involved in it are financially and morally stimulated. It is important to keep in mind the strengths and weaknesses of participative management (Alyahya & Aldausari, 2021). Participative management is associated with the introduction of new technological solutions in all spheres of life

(Perezolova, 2018). The management model of public administration is based on the theory of new public management. However, despite its innovativeness, this model has several limitations, such as the lack of personal responsibility for decision-making (Karlina & Ryazanov, 2016). Participative management in education should involve all stakeholders, i.e., all subjects of the education process, with real leverage to influence educational issues as well as good managerial thinking to increase managerial resources (Karlina & Ryazanov, 2016).

According to the idea that school is an open system with its executive to set work plans and roles, including resources, management, and duties according to organization structure. There are also work operation and work result evaluation after projects and other activities (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Therefore it is essential to build a network and participation in education by focusing on strengthening the relations within the network, participating in activities that follow mutual purposes, sharing thoughts and ideas, doing and taking responsibilities altogether, including sharing the benefit and fulfilling to one another. Each school has its own strong point such as education, or activity hosting, Learning Center, tools and equipment, vehicles, which all can be supporting each other. Schools can expand their work operation or strategies to other schools within the network or helping them to strengthen their weak points as well (Tosapon Teekaporn, 2017).

According to the importance of child development, of education cooperation network, and local administrative organization's policy, including the development of national standard of child development center, the researcher intended to study the needs of child development center's management, local administrative organization, Northeast, to help local administrative organization proceed on their activities towards government's education policy and increase competency in providing education with highest efficiency and effectiveness.

2. Method

This research used mixed Methodology which can be divided into two phases as follow

1) Study of elements and indicators

① The current situation, desirable outcomes, and needs for further development were studied by using a questionnaire that asked participants their opinions on the above factors, and scored according to a 5-point Likert scale. The participants in this study were 354 school administrators, academic teachers, the president of local school boards, parent representatives, and community leaders of the communities of the sample schools, all of which were Child Development Center, local administrative organization, in Northeast.

② Data Collection Tools is a suitable assessment for elements and indicators.

③ Data collection, analytics, synthesis, principles concept theories from papers, textbooks and research.

④ Organizing and Content Analysis.

⑤ Statistics used in research are the Average, Standard deviation and Priority Needs Index ($PNI_{modified}$).

2) Design guidelines and evaluation for management to improve the quality of Child Development Center, local administrative organization in Northeast

The researcher completed document studies, and interviews qualified experts to improve guidelines of management, including the evaluation of possibility and appropriateness of the guidelines using 5-rating scale evaluation.

Analysis of data obtained from the suitability assessment form of elements and indicators by determining the mean and standard deviation interpreted according to the midpoint criteria as follows: 4.51–5.00 means most suitable, 3.51–4.50 means very suitable, 2.51–3.50 means moderately appropriate, 1.51–2.50 means less suitable, 1.00–1.50 means least suitable (Suwimon Wongwanich, 2019).

3. Results

The results of The current condition and desirable condition, including needs of Child Development Center's development, local administrative organization in Northeast as shown in Tables 1–5.

Table 1. Average, standard deviation of current condition of the management to improve quality of Child Development Center (n = 354)

Child Development Center's management	current condition		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Appropriate rating
1. Management	2.41	0.87	Low
2. Personnel	2.43	0.92	Low
3. Buildings, environment, and safety	2.41	0.95	Low
4. Academic and curricular activities	2.41	0.91	Low
5. Participation in support from every sector	2.41	0.94	Low
Average	2.42	0.87	Low

From Table 1, it was found that the current situation of Child Development Center's management was in low level ($\bar{X} = 2.42$). Considering each component, found that suitable at the low level. The most appropriate elements are personnel ($\bar{X} = 2.43$). Management ($\bar{X} = 2.41$). Academic and curricular activities ($\bar{X} = 2.41$). Participation in support from every sector ($\bar{X} = 2.41$) and Buildings, environment, and safety ($\bar{X} = 2.41$) respectively.

Table 2. Average, standard deviation of desirable condition of the management to improve quality of Child Development Center (n = 354)

Child Development Center's management	desirable condition		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Appropriate rating
1. Management	4.44	0.41	Highest
2. Personnel	4.48	0.39	Highest
3. Buildings, environment, and safety	4.49	0.36	Highest
4. Academic and curricular activities	4.45	0.42	Highest
5. Participation in support from every sector	4.49	0.46	Highest
Average	4.48	0.30	Highest

From Table 2, it was found that the desirable condition of Child Development Center's management was in highest level ($\bar{X} = 4.48$). Considering each component, found that suitable at the highest level. The most appropriate elements are building, environment, and safety and Participation in support from every sector ($\bar{X} = 4.49$), personnel ($\bar{X} = 4.48$). Academic and curricular activities ($\bar{X} = 4.45$) and Management ($\bar{X} = 4.44$) respectively.

Table 3. Average, standard deviation of current condition, desirable condition, and needs, of the management to improve quality of Child Development Center (n = 354)

Child Development Center's management	desirable condition	current condition	PNI (I-D)	PNI _{modified} (I-D)/D	Order
	(I)	(D)			
	\bar{X}	\bar{X}			
1. Management	4.44	2.41	2.03	0.84	3
2. Personnel	4.48	2.43	2.05	0.84	3
3. Buildings, environment, and safety	4.49	2.41	2.08	0.86	1
4. Academic and curricular activities	4.45	2.41	2.04	0.85	2
5. Participation in support from every sector	4.49	2.41	2.08	0.86	1
Average	4.48	2.42	2.06	0.85	

From Table 3, For the result of needs analysis of management at child development center, when considering the index, it was found that the highest need was building, environment, and safety, along with participation and support from every sector (PNI_{modified} = 0.86). Academic and curricular activities (PNI_{modified} = 0.85). Management (PNI_{modified} = 0.84), and personnel (PNI_{modified} = 0.85) respectively.

Table 4. Indicates guideline for Child Development Center’s management, local administrative organization in Northeast (n = 9)

Child Development Center’s management	Guidelines
1. Management	1 .There should be work plans, evaluation, and improvement for the efficiency of the center 2 .Services for children support 3 .Community should be part of the survey of establishment, relocation, centralization and dissolve of the center
2. Personnel	1 .Staff members should have educational background not lower than bachelor’s degree 2 .There should be knowledge and skills improvement for staff members that help with work operation 3 .All staff members you should act accordingly to the policy and work operation plan that follows academic principle
3. Buildings, environment, and safety	1 .It should be clean, soothing, strong, and safe. The location should be in the environment that is free from pollution or dangerous areas 2 .The allocation of areas should be designed to be suitable for children 3 .The place for food preparation should be hygienic
4. Academic and curricular activities	1 .Childhood education curriculum should be suitable for learners and local community 2 .Appropriate media and innovation 3 .Use childhood education curriculum 2546B.E. As a guideline to provide learning experience for children
5. Participation in support from every sector	1 .The Child Development Center’s committee meeting should be consisted of all sectors. 2 .There should be activities or participation in important occasions or festivals 3 .All work operation of Child Development Center should be publicly known via PR so people can acknowledge that

From Table 4, it was found that suggestions in management at Child Development Center, local administrative organization in Northeast are 1) For management perspective, there should be work plans, evaluation, and Improvement of word process of the center for it to be effective 2) For personnel, those who are related must have qualified educational background and can perform their roles as stated in the policy and work plan according to academic principle 3) Buildings, environment, and safety, all should be clean, safe and suitable for children 4) Academic and curricular activities, childhood education curriculum should be suitable for students and the community, with suitable media and innovation, and 5) participation and support from every sector, which meavn there should be meetings activities and PR about the center’s work operation

Table 5. Indicates average, standard deviation, and the result of appropriateness evaluation of Child Development Center’s management, local administrative organization in Northeast (n = 9)

Child Development Center’s management	current condition		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	level
1. Management	4.50	0.81	Highest
2. Personnel	4.44	0.90	Highest
3. Buildings, environment, and safety	4.61	0.85	Highest
4. Academic and curricular activities	4.52	0.81	Highest
5. Participation in support from every sector	4.56	0.84	Highest
Average	4.52	0.65	Highest

From Table 5, it was found that the appropriateness of Child Development Center’s management, local administrative organization in Northeast was in high level ($\bar{X} = 4.52$) and when consider each perspective it was found that the appropriateness was in high level in all perspective. The most appropriate elements are Buildings, environment, and safety ($\bar{X} = 4.61$). Participation in support from every sector ($\bar{X} = 4.56$). Academic and curricular activities ($\bar{X} = 4.52$). Management ($\bar{X} = 4.50$), and personnel ($\bar{X} = 4.44$) respectively.

4. Discussion

The study result of current condition of Child Development Center’s management was in low level. And when considering each perspective, it was found that the highest score of current condition was personnel. The reason why the result indicates so might be because personnel at Child Development Center, local administrative organization in Northeast have suitable qualification that can perform roles and responsibilities in managing the

center and provide education and development for children academically properly as the community aims for. It is in alignment with study of Wittaya Keereekulpaisarn and Thirasak Uppamaiathichai (2021) who has conducted to study of needs for management skills of administrators in educational institutes during Covid 19 pandemic, Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office, area 2, it was found that the actual skills of administrators was in high level and when considering each perspective it was found that the highest current condition was personnel management skill.

For desirable condition, is in high level, and when consider each perspective it was found that the highest desirable condition was building, environment and safety. It is because children from 2 to 5 years are of the age that need special care, especially for their safety. Because they cannot take care of themselves. Therefore, care and attention from teachers and parents are essential. It is in alignment with the study result of Roger (2013) who conducted the research of core structure of professional development: Teachers' learning and structural change in Child Development Center. The result of the research was that the cooperation of school's principal in developing personal along with teachers is another way of support students' achievement and goal in teaching. It also creates and supports the improvement of the learning environment .

For the order of needs, the first is buildings, environment, and safety, along with participation and support from every sector (PNI_{modified} = 0.86). It might be because buildings, environment, and safety are fundamental factor in providing education of Child Development Center, especially during the time that there is pandemic of various contagious diseases, such as Covid-19, RSV, flu, etc. Child Development Center needs to manage its building, environment, to follow the standard. So that children, teachers, and parents are safe from contagious diseases. It also includes the building of educational network considering the location, which is related to community, educational institute of every level, organizations, so that they all can help improve and support education of Child Development Center. It also aligns with the study result of Buford)2012 (who conducted research about parents' attitude towards childhood learning, and it was found that the purpose of decentralization is to give authority to local community to improve its education. The pattern for education should be expanded into urban areas as well with the cooperation from local school. School should not be stuck with its policy, while the community should pitch the idea of policy that suits their ability. Another thing that school should take into consideration is the responsibility of the activities that school are hosting and to put that into the vision for future operation.

Design and evaluation of Child Development Center's management consists of five components (1) management of buildings, environment, and safety (2) participation and support from every sector (3) academic and curricular activities (4) management, and (5) personnel. Local administrative organization should pay attention to all perspective, especially safety and participation, because it would create cooperation which benefits the learning of children in the community. This is in alignment with the concept of social network by George C. Homans (1967) and Richard Emerson (1997) They agreed that close relationship among people will create mutual goal, build trust, and lead to sharing information and benefits. The study was also in alignment with Ribchester and Edwards (2007) who studied about the cooperation in network of small primary schools in the community and it was found that the cooperation of schools is the only strategies that would expand the benefit towards growing schools. Building Corporation within the network will be the mutual spot for compromising which decreases internal tension. It also helps with the issues of negative effect from decreasing of administrators in local education which was important and to decrease competitiveness in students' number and increase credibility of those who are related.

New Knowledge

According to the analysis of child development center's need management, and from the analysis of needs of management at Child Development Center and evaluation of appropriateness of the center, there are guidelines in improving management which consists of 5 main components with 15 guidance as indicates.

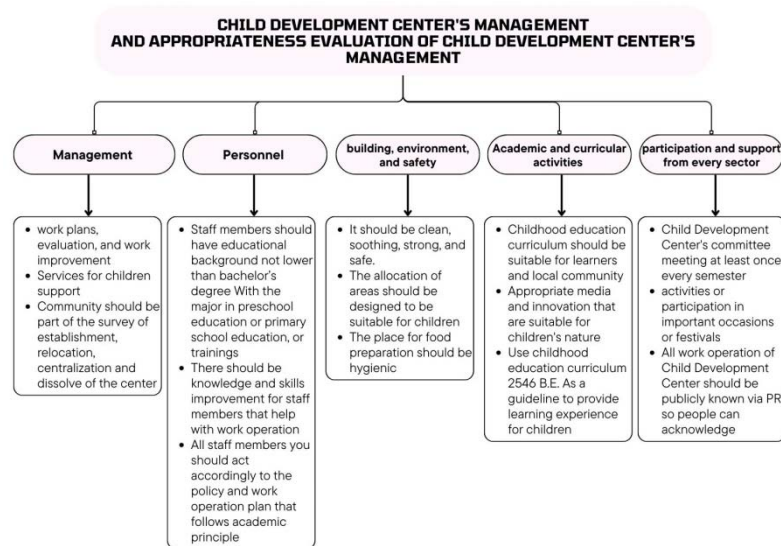


Figure 1. Indicates components of Child Development Center, evaluation of appropriateness of the management size

5. Suggestion

5.1 Suggestions to Implement

- 1) From the study results it was found that the need for surrounding building and safety is most required. Therefore, executives of children development center should promote and focus on standards of managing environment for safety. There should also be a policy and plan that cover safety of building structure, location, interior and exterior, all equipment and tools, including related factors and surroundings of the building. The playground equipment should be suitable to children, risk-free, and constant checkups for other dangerous matters
- 2) According to the study results, it was found that the following need is participation management and support from every sector. Therefore, child development center's executives should promote and focus on creating cooperation among the center and parents, to create participation. And connect local wisdom network, both government agencies and private sectors to develop work process within the center, along with frequent activities and support from community members towards the center's work.
- 3) Child development center, under the supervision of local administration in Northeast, should seek guideline to develop the management according to its needs. So that it can promote development and improve the management of the center to reach the standard and continue its efficiency and effectiveness.

5.2 Suggestions for Next Research

- 1) There should be a study of factors that affect child development's standard management, local administrative organization
- 2) There should be a study of learning experience that is in alignment with the National Standard for Early Childhood Care, Development, and Education, 2546 B.E.

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Authors' contributions

Piyanun Phulsopha was responsible for designing and editing the research study and drafting the research article. Associate Professor Dr.Pacharawit Chansirisira is responsible for data collection. Associate Professor Dr.Suwat Julsuwan drafted the manuscript. Moreover, there were no special agreements. There were no special agreements regarding authorship.

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The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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