



RESEARCH ARTICLE

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE ERA OF A NEW PARADIGM IN EDUCATION FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the behavior that reflects the visionary leadership of elementary school principals in the era of a new paradigm in education for the 21st century and to compare behavior by gender, work experience, and levels of education. The survey methodology was used, gathering data from a sample of the population who are public elementary school principals in Khon Kaen province. The results showed that: (1) the public elementary school principals had behavior that reflects the visionary leadership to a high extent, (2) male and female school administrators equally exhibited behavior that reflects the visionary leadership, (3) school administrators with work experience of 5-15 years showed behavior that reflects the visionary leadership more so than those with less than 5 years and those with more than 15 years, and (4) the school administrators who graduated with postgraduate education had behavior reflecting the visionary leadership more so than those who completed their undergraduate studies.

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INTRODUCTION

Sanrattana, Parkay, Phrakrusutheejarayawattana, Phrakrupaladsamai, and Suwannoi (2016) analyzed and synthesized concepts of various scholars, and found that leadership is defined as a basic idea in two respects: (1) the definition of leadership is based on the idea to achieve success by way of others, to trust other people having the desire and ability to work together to achieve coordination with each other by inviting inspirational leaders or by the relationship of the group which is the focus of the new organization or a new world, (2) the definition of leadership is based on ideas for change and for a better future. From two such concepts, Sanrattana et al. (2016) have taken the basic idea of these two together that integration, "Leadership refers to the relationship between leader and follower in a relational process to transition to a new world or a better future whether the leaders are by position or by nature". In such definitions, the focus is on the transition from the old world to the new world or a better future. Such a transition requires a visionary leadership or a vision of leadership for a new world or a better future and a

matter of effort to achieve practical results in achieving the vision. In accordance with the opinion of Van Staden, Scheepers, and Rieger (2000), visionary leadership is particularly important for organizations that want to develop in a better way. Effective organizations need leaders with vision who have a direction in practice, support the followers, and as a developer to cause change. Also, in accordance with the opinion of Manasse (1986), if the organization has changed for the better and done so quickly leaders must have the ability to decide on the conditions that should be the future of the organization. Starting from the personal vision to preach to the vision of a shared vision of colleagues, then to communicate the vision and additional power to the practices which contribute to the performance. Perspective towards the vision, that is the key feature of a leader from the past to the present. In particular, the outlook for school administrators of as Pejza (1985) said, school administrators need to have a vision. It is not possible to call school administrators leaders who lacks vision, because vision will point the direction of the school, teachers, students, and also the management team. The consequence is to have a plan that indicates the path to achieve the desired goal. The views of Manasse (1986) mentioned that school administrators must have a clear picture of the goals that are important to the school, inspire and motivate to action, and

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switch from vision to reality. The opinions of the American Association of School Administrators (1986) said that school administrators must have a vision and be able to communicate that vision to others, to provide them an incentive to work, and to make the vision become a reality. In accordance with the opinion of Sakitvanish (2009), visionary leadership is the ability of leaders to create a vision. This will enable the organization to move to the right direction and is able to lay the foundations of a sustainable organization in which change and competition occur. Lonlue (2011) discussed the composition of the visionary leadership for school effectiveness in four areas: 1) the ability to create a vision (formulating), 2) the ability to communicate a vision (articulating), 3) the ability to promote and support personnel involved in the fulfillment of the vision (implementing), and 4) being a good role model in integrity (role model).

### Purpose

In the current era the knowledge of society is due to the rapid spread of digital technology. As a result, society is changing in the new paradigm in many areas, including education. The change from the old paradigm for the 20th century as a new paradigm for the 21st century, such as the change from passive learning to active learning, text driven to research driven, time based to outcome based, classroom within 4 walls to global classroom, teacher-centered to students-centered, fragmented curriculum to integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum, grades averaged to grades based on what was learned, factory model based upon the needs of employers for the industrial age of the 20th century to multiple literacies of the 21st century to living and working in a globalized new millennium, etc. (Tirto, 2010; Nair, 2007; Churches, 2008; and Roberts, 2011), which changes this paradigm school administrators need to have for a behavior that reflects the visionary leadership. Both in terms of its ability to create a vision (formulating), the dissemination of vision (articulating), to promote and support the implementation of the vision (implementing), and being a good role model. Moreover, in the current phase is a policy of educational reform of the Ministry of Education which focused on improving the quality of basic education to higher level by adhering to school administrators as an important vehicle to drive success. Thus, this research aims to study how much the behavior of elementary school principals reflects the visionary leadership and, when analyzed by the different gender, work experience, and levels of education of the elementary school principals, whether those reflect different levels of visionary leadership or not. Both the overall and each aspect of the study, in order to get empirical research, help guide the development of elementary school principals.

### Hypothesis

The results of the research on the leadership of school administrators of some scholars, such as researches of Subpurissakul (2006), Saengsrithammakul (2012), Pho-Oan (2015), and Chusen (2016) found that school administrators' different personal status reflect different leadership. It implies that this research will have a portfolio of similar studies in it. It is expected that the elementary school principals who are of different gender, work experience, and levels of education will

show differences in behavior that reflects the visionary leadership. Differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

### Conceptual Framework

This results of the literature related to the composition of the visionary leadership for school effectiveness in four areas: 1) the ability to create a vision (formulating), 2) the ability to communicate a vision (articulating), 3) the ability to promote and support personnel involved in the fulfillment of the vision (implementing), and 4) being a good role model in integrity (role model). Researcher determined that four areas were dependent variables. The study of literature also related to research in the years 2006 – 2016 which researchers found that most of the variables of gender, work experiences, and levels of education were identified as the independent variables. A conceptual framework for research is planned as an illustration.

### Methodology

This study is a survey research. Survey population is the administrators of public elementary schools in Khon Kaen province which is a large province in the Northeast of Thailand of 1007. Determining the sample size by using square blocks of Krejcie and Morgan in the level of significance at 0.05 on a sample of 278. Collecting data from a sample with a simple random sampling method. Using the questionnaire titled "Visionary Leadership" developed by Lonlue (2011). The questionnaire has a scale of about a fifth of translating the respective value of more for less is 5 = highest, 4 = high, 3 = moderate, 2 = little, and 1 = least. The overall reliability of the questionnaire is 0.968. The reliability aspect of the formulation = 0.978, articulation = 0.941, implementation = 0.975, and role model = 0.981. In data collection, received 234 copies of questionnaires were returned, representing 84.17 percent of all queries sent. Information received was analyzed using a computer program to determine the mean, the standard deviation, t-test and F-test.

### RESULTS

1. Considering the criteria of the mean is between 4:51 to 5:00 = highest, 3:51 to 4:50 = high, 2:51 to 3:50 = moderate, 1:51 to 2:50 = less, and 0:01 to 1:50 = least that the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province had overall behavior that reflects the visionary leadership at "high" level (mean = 4.20, S.D. = 0.54), considering it was found that in all aspects as well. In descending order from the highest to the lowest as follows: 1) formulating (mean = 4.31), implementing (mean = 4.21), role model (mean = 4.16) and articulating (mean = 4.12).
2. No difference was found between male and female public elementary school administrators on their behavior that reflects the visionary leadership, thus rejecting the set hypothesis as indicated in Table 1.
3. Behavior that reflects the visionary leadership of administrators of public elementary schools is different between the three groups of working less than 5 years, 5-15 years, and more than 15 years. The differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, thus accepting the set hypothesis as indicated in Table 2.

**Table 1. Comparison of the behavior that reflects the visionary leadership of the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province by gender**

Male			Female			t
n	mean	S.D.	n	mean	S.D.	
135	4.15	0.43	99	4.27	0.46	-1.902

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

**Table 2. Comparison of the behavior that reflects the visionary leadership of the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province by work experience**

Years of work experience, sample size, and mean			Sources of variance	df	SS	MS	F
less than 5 years	5 - 15 years	more than 15 years					
47	104	83	Between group	2	1.72	0.86	4.406*
4.09	4.30	4.15	Within group	221	43.24	0.19	
			Total	223	44.96	-	

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

**Table 3. Test results, the difference of the paired means**

Years of work experience	less than 5 years	5 - 15 years	More than 15 years
less than 5 years	-	-.2108*	-
5 - 15 years		-	.1462
more than 15 years			-

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

**Table 4. Comparison of the behavior that reflects the visionary leadership of the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province by levels of education**

Education Level						t
bachelor's degree			Master's degree			
n	mean	S.D.	n	mean	S.D.	
57	4.01	0.56	177	4.25	0.39	5.832

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The results revealed differences as such. The researchers tested the difference in mean coupled with Scheffe's method and found that school administrators who have 5-15 years of work experience exhibit behavior that reflects the visionary leadership over the school administrators group with experience under 5 years and above 15 years of data analysis in Table 3.

- 4) Administrators of public elementary schools in Khon Kaen province holding a master's degree had behavior reflecting the visionary leadership more so than ones holding a bachelor's degree with the differences statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which is based on the assumptions set. The results in Table 4.

## DISCUSSION

- The study found the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province, with overall behavior that reflects the visionary leadership at "high" level then. That is consistent with the findings of Sanoi (2014) who made a research on "A Study of Factors Influencing to Visionary Leadership for School Administrators of Primary Educational Service Area Office, Lower Northern". This may be due to the fact that the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province are in a state reform school by the Ministry of
- Education, and the changing paradigm of education for the 21st century, as mentioned above. The school administrators need to have visionary leadership in school administration efficiency and effectiveness. And acts of Education, school administrators have also upheld a key role in driving policy in order to achieve success. Leadership has developed a vision for school administrators at any time. As can be seen from the requirements of the Office of the Basic Education (2553), given the leadership traits vision to guide the development, management schools are fully consistent with the definitions and concepts used in this research. "The visionary leadership is the ability of leaders to create a vision. This will enable the organization to move to the right direction and is able to lay the foundations of a sustainable organization. With change and competition as they occur."
- The study found that the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province, exhibit behavior that reflects the visionary leadership in "formulating" higher than the others. This may be explained by the fact that today's world is changing rapidly. It is necessary to create the vision all the time to keep up with events and increasing demand. This is consistent with research of Lonlua (2011), who found that school administrators often have a habit of creating basic vision. Reflecting on the behavior of data collection, analysis of circumstances both

within and outside the organization, setting the direction and goals for the future through the vision of the school, and searching for problems that occur in an organization that is a challenge. In addition, stimulating creativity and thinking outside the box, and to create an environment that supports creativity.

- The study found that the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province, showed behavior that reflects the visionary Leadership in “articulating a vision” in which even at a high level but other than that then. Probably because the communication process of vision in primary schools is not enough. Given the importance of communicating a concrete vision into practice lacks clarity. And by a common problem that school administrators are accustomed to “having idea”, but lack of skills “Putting into practice”, which is consistent with the research of Suthatini (1997) and research of Sanoi (2014) found that the habit of communicating the vision of the school is lower than other studied aspects.
- The comparison showed public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province, male and female, with no difference in behaviors that demonstrate visionary leadership. Probably as a result of information for enhancing vision, there are currently thousands. Every opportunity to access knowledge in various fields easily and fast. Including opportunities to be developed by the agency fairly. Making sexual factors affecting the efficient and effective administration in different schools. This is consistent with the research of Lonlua (2011) found that the success of the management empirical study in the current environment. Male and female executive management. They are competent in managing and operating efficiently and effectively as well. And women have been highly recognized and honored to enter management positions in school.
- The comparison showed that the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province who have 5-15 years of work experience showed behavior that reflects the visionary leadership more so than those elementary school principals in groups of work experience under 5 years and above 15 years. Probably due to the fact that school administrators who have been working less than five years, have recently been appointed to a packed school of administrators. The executive who has worked more than 15 may be lost because of continuing self. It left little time work. To be retired. This is consistent with the research of Pholraksa (2013) who found that school administrators working in the medium term of approximately 5-15 years are considered to have paved the way to work at a high level. It is the age that wants to accelerate their own development and development to advance the competitive position with other school administrators.
- The comparison showed that the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province, who graduated with a master's behavior reflects the leadership's vision more so than those who graduated with a bachelor. This demonstrates the importance of education. The higher the education level, the higher the level of visionary leadership. The study in higher education, as an individual, and acquire new knowledge both in depth and width. That would be beneficial to strengthen visionary leadership. Consistent

with the research of Pho-Oan (2015) who found that administrators and teachers under the jurisdiction of the primary offense who graduate at a higher level would have a better understanding of the phenomenon and expected higher than those who graduated in the lower level.

## Recommendation

Although research has found that in the public elementary school administrators in Khon Kaen province, an overall behavior that reflects the visionary leadership is high but the school administrators themselves and agencies there should take measures to strengthen the visionary leadership and ensure it is ongoing, uphold the idea that educators never can stop learning, the concept of lifelong learning, and that concept of school administrators in the knowledge society. If no progress to develop themselves and develop. It is a backwards, and to focus on measures to strengthen the skills compelling vision into practice. The concept of think and do (walk the talk). In addition, the agency should develop mechanisms to strengthen staff development leadership with vision, style and methods which are appropriate and effective. For developing visionary leadership to a group of school administrators who have experience working in the initial stage and the group that has been working in close-retired. Including encouraging school administrators who have been educated to a higher level.

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