

**DEVELOPMENT OF AN
ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR
THE ENGLISH PROGRAM IN SCHOOLS OF THE
ST. GABRIEL'S FOUNDATION, THAILAND**

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Abstract: The research objectives of this study were 1) To identify leadership characteristics used in English Program in schools within the St. Gabriel's Foundation of Thailand, 2) To identify desirable leadership practices for the leaders of English Program in schools within the St. Gabriel's Foundation of Thailand, and 3) To develop an Administrative Leadership Model for the leaders of English Program in schools within the St. Gabriel's Foundation of Thailand. The study was limited to the English Program within the St. Gabriel's Foundation schools of Thailand and used pre-selected quantitative analysis that would be specific to the research questions, measurable statistically, achievable in the time frame, and realistic with regard to recommendations for the leadership of the English program. The research outcome was primarily concerned with English Program's currently operating in 8 schools under the governance of the St. Gabriel's Foundation of Thailand and within Ministry of Education regulation.

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the 5 theories of leadership: Trait Theory, Leadership Style Theory, Situational Leadership Theory, Transactional Leadership Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory. The questionnaire was distributed to 205 foreign teachers to identify current leadership characteristics as well as desirable leadership characteristics for five characteristics: Communicative, Empathy, Creative, Confident, and Maturity. The data analysis was computed to find the frequency, percentage, mean, MDF, and ranking. Moreover the content analysis was analyzed for the open ended questions.

When the collected data interpretation and data analysis were achieved, the researcher used the document research as the grounds for developing an administrative leadership model for the English Program in schools of the St. Gabriel's foundation, Thailand. The proposed model was developed and confirmed by a committee of experts using the connoisseurship model.

The findings supported the research objectives in this study. To identify current and desirable leadership characteristics used in the English Program in schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand. Although, the researcher concluded that the data identified particular characteristics as relative strengths because of their positions in the statistical rankings, the researcher was

also able to conclude, that there was a gap in the perceptions of current leadership and desired leadership characteristics. The most significant statistical gap was communication between followers and leaders and the perceptions that current leaders do not, provide timely constructive feedback, or, do not discuss organizational policy changes with staff. The researcher also observed that leadership was perceived as not emphasizing the good qualities in others and leaders not spending time listening and advising staff. Other key findings were the perceived desires from followers for leadership to, encourage a more innovative working environment, initiate new ideas and good practices and be seen as more, quickly adapting to changes and challenges. Based on these findings, the Administrative Leadership Model was constructed for the leaders in English Program in 8 schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand. The Administrative Leadership Model was developed from the higher ranked leadership characteristics and confirmed by a committee of experts using the connoisseurship model.

Keywords: Leadership Characteristics, Leadership Practices, Administrative Leadership Model, the St. Gabriel's Foundation of Thailand

Overview

The efforts of ministries of education worldwide and specifically Thailand to provide English language programs for their school populations; the determination of non-native-speaking parents to acquire English proficiency for their children and the ASEAN trade partner export statistics, Thailand's major trading partners are the USA, Australia, New Zealand and the 25 countries in the European Union and Canada. This trade is conducted in English using the American Dollar as the trading currency (Kirkpatrick, 2010). The English Program was delineated into the English Program (EP) and Mini English Program (MEP). The difference between the two provisions was based on local supply and demand. The English Program is an arrangement of teaching and learning where Standard and Academic English is the medium of instruction but the dominant school culture remains Thai. The Ministry of Education, having initiated the programs, felt no need to over-regulate. As a result there was to be no prescriptive management model for the new English Program. The English Program was to succeed or fail as market forces dictated (Kirkpatrick, 2010). This research examined the need for and the implementation of a relevant Administrative Leadership Model to meet the changing needs and expectations of the English Program, specifically, in the schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand. However, over many years of the

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English Program's development, there had been a growing awareness of reoccurring problems in that arrangement. More problematic, perhaps, had been the less than successful recruitment and retention of qualified foreign teachers, a key expectation of parents and part of the original requirements of an English Program (Moodian, 2009).

Theoretical Framework

The five leadership theories, were specifically selected as the basis of research for they represented key development stages in the thinking about leadership, chronologically and theoretically, were specifically addressing leadership issues rather than discussions within the behavioral or cognitive psychology disciplines. They provided coherent frameworks where instrument question types would be created and closely linked (Dialectically).

envisaged or included in the research.

Research Objectives

1. To identify leadership characteristics used in the English Program in schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand.

2. To identify desirable leadership characteristics for the leaders of the English Program in schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand.

3. To develop an Administrative Leadership Model for the leaders of the English Program in schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand.

Research methodology

The research was quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research was statistically reliable (Nykiel, 2002). In addition, the instrument's 'Open Question' produced qualitative research that was projectable to a given population (Nykiel, 2002).

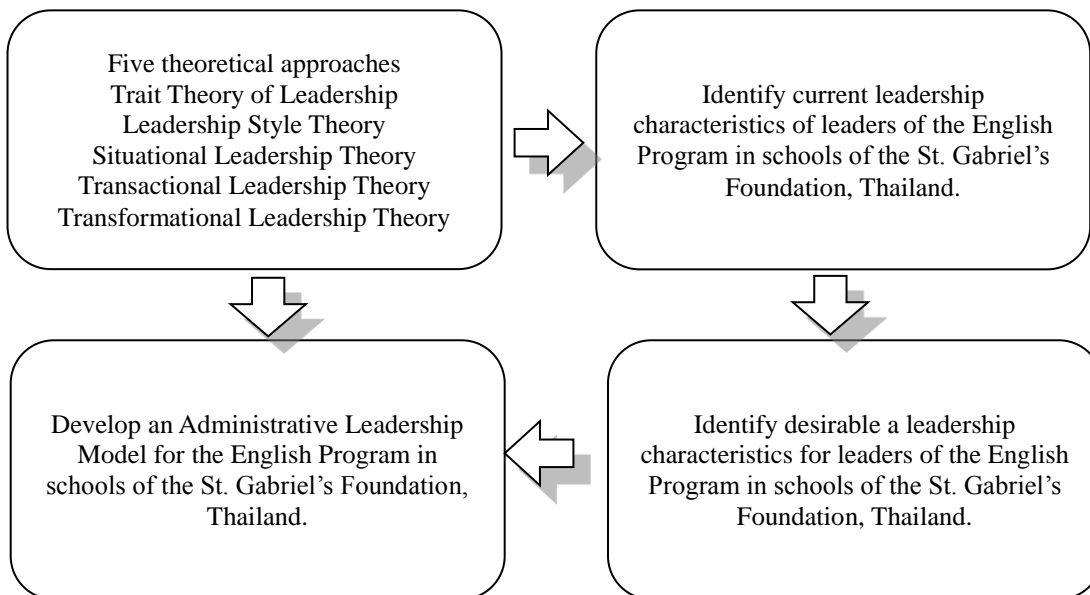


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Development of an Administrative Leadership Model for the English Program in Schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand

The research was specifically focused on current and desired leadership characteristics, as perceived by the research population of 205 foreign teachers and only concerned with leadership. The 8 cohort schools of the Saint Gabriel Foundation, Thailand, chosen for research, were those schools running some form of English Program, at primary and secondary level. The research instrument questionnaire, that produced the findings, was specifically designed to elicit responses to statements and questions, deriving from theory that was relevant to the context of an English Program. Any findings and conclusions, therefore, only had meaning and relevance to leadership and foreign teachers within those 8 schools. Recommendations from findings were aimed only at the present and future development of leadership in the English Program, to include other types of school, was

Phase I Documentary Research.

Phase II The Development of an Appropriate Research Instrument.

- Validity
- Reliability

Phase III Data Collection.

- Population
- Collection of Data
- Data Analysis

Phase IV Developing of the Administrative Leadership Model.

- Develop the Administrative Leadership Model

- Focus Group to Validate the Model

Population

The population of foreign teachers within the research 8 cohort schools of the Saint Gabriel’s Foundation, Thailand, running some form of the English Program, was 205. The population of teachers did not require sampling, as the number of 205 teachers was felt to be an appropriate research study population.

Data Analysis

The researcher computed the frequency, percentage for analyzing the demographic data and used mean, GAP analysis to identify leadership characteristics used in English Program and MDF Ranking to identify desirable leadership characteristics

Developing the Administrative Leadership Model

There were two stages for developing the administrative leadership model as follows:

When the data collection and data analysis were achieved, the researcher used the documentary research and the findings, data analysis as the grounds for developing an administrative leadership model. The researcher developed a first draft of model.

The proposed model was validated through the Connoisseurship model. In this research, a group of ten experts (five experts in educational leadership and five educational leaders in the English Program) were invited to evaluate and comment on the proposed model. The revision was made as a result of the consensus of experts.

The following figure represents the results from these consultations and modifications.

The Administrative Leadership Model, presented in this research was populated with operational definitions derived from the first principles of leadership approaches outlined in the Conceptual and Theoretical Framework. These operational definitions, or leadership characteristics, were then used in the research instrument. However, the process, for deriving these operational definitions from theoretical approaches, started with the identification of theoretical first principles, or key ideas, which were then abstracted into operational definitions presented as constructs or ‘Characteristics’. Under each of these ‘Characteristics’ a subordinate domain of generic leadership competences were presented to respondents in the research instrument. Each of these subordinate leadership competences had the potential, if chosen as desirable, to be then further developed into leadership skills, through leadership training programs

The process was then followed for each of the 5 Leadership approaches, for consistency. First principles from the leadership approaches were abstracted into operational definitions or leadership characteristics and then further abstracted to subordinate domains of leadership competencies. This allowed the research instrument to be relevant to all English program staff, external validity and firmly based in theory. Importantly, the instrument would be recognizably addressing the research objectives, validity, whilst at the same time, allowing the respondents to easily contextualize the content and intention of the research instrument, content validity.

The findings, therefore, indicated a 4 strata model. The core stratum was the research objective (3), Administrative Leadership. The second strata represented the key theories of leadership. The third stratum was

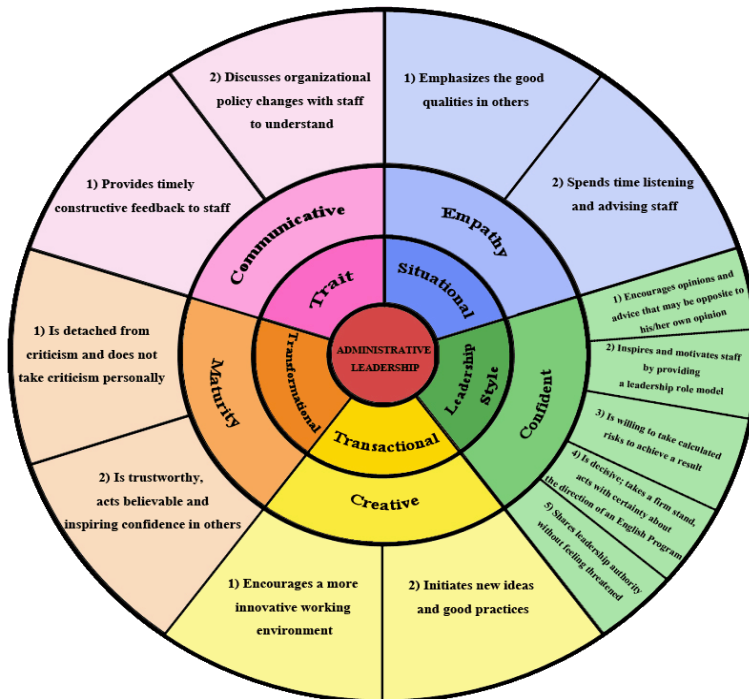


Figure 2: Administrative Leadership Model

linked to the key leadership characteristics, the ranking of which was concluded from the data analysis and a mathematical formula.

As part of the research, the research population was asked to respond to an open question, giving respondents an opportunity to focus their opinion and view of leadership. The results of that Linguistic Content Analysis confirmed the ranking of Communicative and Empathy characteristics for leaders of an English Program. It provides a Conceptual and Linguistic Content Analysis of responses, to an open question, from the research instrument questionnaire, completed by all respondents at 8 cohort schools of the Saint Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand.

The model, as a workplace utility, in English Program in 8 cohort schools of the St. Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand, has practical application on several levels. On a basic level, the Administrative Leadership Model acts as an Aide-mémoire, reminding leaders to respond positively to the findings of this research. For example, before leaders make a decision that concerns a policy change for the English Program the model indicates 'Communicative' procedures to be followed before decisions are implemented: 'discuss organizational policy changes with staff, also, 'spending time listening and advising staff.' This implies a systematic consultation period, to gain a consensus of understanding from stakeholders, before policy is changed.

On another level, the model can be utilized as the basis of a 'Procedures Manual' for leaders. The desirable characteristics for leaders and the subordinate domains of desirable actions linked with those characteristics, can be interpreted as instructions and directions for the day-to-day operation to ensure consistency and quality and also provide written responses for contingencies or solutions for common problems

The model can also be adapted as a series of assessment criteria for outcomes in Leader Training, The 'Characteristics' and the subordinate domains of desirable actions linked with those characteristics becomes a series of assessment outcomes, where leaders can be evaluated on how successful they have been in 'Fostering a working environment that values ideas, builds a community of practice and where trust is mutually developed'.

Finally, the model can be used as goals and objectives for a 'Cultural Induction' for new staff and form the foundations of, 'follow-up Workshops, in the form of INSET training.

Summary of Findings

The research population illustrated that there was an equitable gender split of 48.7 % female while 51.3 % male. The researcher also concluded that the majority of respondents were 26-35 years old years old had a Bachelor Degree and had been in the profession of teaching for 4 to 10 years.

The participating research population of 205 foreign teachers, from the 8 cohort schools of the Saint Gabriel's

Foundation, Thailand, returned a statistical ranking of first for Communicative leadership characteristics deriving from Trait Theory This was confirmed with data from responses to an open question, which was subject to a linguistic content analysis, and indicated a preference for Communicative Leadership Characteristics.

The primary finding, therefore, was that the research population of foreign teachers perceived a communication gap between leaders and followers the data also identified a statistical ranking of second for Empathy Characteristics deriving from Situational Leadership Theory and a statistical ranking of third for Creative Characteristics deriving from Transactional Theory. Confident Characteristics deriving from Leadership Style Theory and Maturity Characteristics deriving from Transformational Leadership Theory were placed fourth and fifth in the ranking, respectively.

Discussion

The primary finding was that leaders of English Program should be equipped with those communicative traits and competences that facilitate a meaningful, systematic two-way communication between leaders and followers. Confirming that, 'any useful research cannot avoid investigations into leadership characteristics or informed judgments about the desirability or otherwise of leader characteristics (Drunkenly, 1980). The ranking of first for Communicative leadership characteristics, deriving from Trait theory, seems to agree with the notion that, 'Trait theories, proceed from the assumption that people inherit certain qualities or traits making them better suited to leadership' (Shriberg, 2011) and that respondents understood that they were being asked to make, 'judgments regarding what is 'good' or 'successful' in leadership' (Gill, 2006).

The primary finding also agrees with (Stough, 2009) who claimed that there are innate behavioral qualities, critical to leadership and consequently lacking in non-leaders and also Starratt (2011) who stated that any leadership model must also be concerned with establishing direction, vision and goals. The primary finding, therefore agrees with Hughes (2010) that leaders should be a proactive communicators and team builders through consultation, initiating structural improvements, reforms and resolute in seeing change through to the end.

The secondary finding also identified a communication distance between leaders and followers, categorized as a lack of empathy on the part of leaders for their foreign teaching staff. This part of the questionnaire was based on the premise that, 'Leadership depends on understanding the requirements of a given situation including what form that participation should take' (Vroom and Jago, 1988) and the data analysis shows that respondents perceived that 'a good leader develops competence and commitment' (Bass et al, 2008). In this way, just knowing how to relate or communicate with people is different than building collaboration (Blumberg,

1980). Moreover, the secondary findings implied that foreign teachers were attempting to successfully integrate into the host school culture whilst at the same time perceiving that their contributions may not be valued or even welcome.' A good leader develops followers to be self-motivated rather than dependent on others for direction and guidance (Bass, 2008).

The perception of respondents is that, 'leaders make decisions about the nature of the desired state' (Mintzberg, 1989) but 'just knowing how to relate to people is different than building collaboration' (Blumberg and Greenfield, 1980).

Recommendations

The data strongly indicates that foreign teachers have 'the perception that Thai staffs were reluctant or unable to share key information and that misunderstanding, was regularly reported by foreign teachers.' The problem of communication is also exacerbated by 'the language barrier' which makes a meaningful discussion concerning 'curricula adaptations' nearly impossible. The language barrier, affects all aspects of school.

Recommendation One: Standard English, All communications in an English Program, between teachers, students, administrative support staff, leaders, documentation and signage should be in Standard English.

Recommendation Two: Systematic Professional Communication, Procedures should be designed that allow a regular and systematic professional communication between leaders and followers. This communication should be standardized, more frequent, and timely and allow for meaningful feedback that is acted upon.

Recommendation Three: Recruitment, Mentoring and a 'Cultural Induction'

Having recruited a foreign teacher, this communication should be followed up by a system of 'Mentoring' where experienced existing staff allow the new foreign teacher to better understand the standards and good practices associated with being successfully integrated into an English Program. These mentors must be trained, to respond to new staff positively and to be able to guide new staff through the practices and procedures, needed to be a successful English Program teacher.

The final part of this process would be the design and delivery of a 'Cultural Induction' for all new staff.

The findings suggests, that stakeholders and followers, require a leader that 'is detached from criticism and does not take criticism personally', 'is trustworthy, acts believable and inspiring confidence in others ' and as a consequence, is a mentor to staff and respected for competence and experience, asking for advice when facing difficult problems. This is directly linked to the problem of being 'more responsive to the unique impact and requirements of an English Program' (Ch. 1).

Recommendation Four: Leader Training

Administrative leadership is mostly about behavior, whereas management is mostly about processes. An Administrative Leadership training course would directly address leader's behavior and define what leadership is, for an English program. Develop skills in communicating, influencing, and negotiating with followers. Appreciate the importance of the demographical diversity of staff and how to encourage a more positive constructive professional relationship.

Further Research

Further research would be relevant to all followers and leaders and future research could expand the research population to be more inclusive of all stakeholders. Further research could expand the study to include all 14 schools within the St. Gabriel Foundation, thus widening the scope of the research to include other forms of leadership. Further research may need to investigate leadership competences, with the aim of training leaders to lead. This research has suggested that problems and misunderstandings between foreign staff and leadership may have cultural origins and further research could be aimed directly at this hypothesis.

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