

LEADERSHIP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A KINDERGARTEN MODEL IN THE BANGKOK METROPOLIS

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Introduction

In the past twenty years, the concept of Early Childhood development has been raised occasionally due to its ambiguous status in the education pipeline. The more we provide these kinds of services, the more we realize that the scope has to be adapted in order to serve increasing numbers of target groups as well as to catch up with the theoretical movement.

To achieve the objectives set by the National Educational Act, it must start with the family's upbringing reinforced by childcare, schooling, the non-formal education throughout the life span. Everyone can contribute to a child's development by creating new values and offering a learning-oriented environment and prompting cultivating activities towards goodness, intelligence, happiness, energy and strength of the nation's future human resources. Children have to learn happily as well as acquire skills development through modern media, including raising creativity, developing personality, broadening horizons -in addition to academic subjects.

Education researchers believe that learning through playing and feeling as active learning is a significant factor in bringing out the potential of each child. The teacher's role has changed from teaching students directly, to that of arranging students within the atmosphere that stimulates them to learn, to encourage and evoke learning, while presenting opportunities to express and interconnect ideas and to observe students the way they are naturally learning.

The ideology of early childhood education provision is to give a fundamental education that offers Thai children a life foundation so that they can grow up perfectly and have age- suitable development that is balanced physically, emotionally, mentally, socially and intellectually; based on abilities and differences between individuals through activities that stimulate and promote brain development. To the greatest extent another need is to promote their preparedness to learn in elementary education and higher, which will lead to their being a quality person and citizen of their country in the future. Early childhood education focuses on the development of children in the basic of modes of rearing, training and promoting learning processes that are in accordance with the nature and development of each child in the contexts of cultures and civilizations. Further, social ways of life that bear particularities and differences are relevant in the context. (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2005)

As a result, the researcher wishes to further study early childhood education practices, theories, standards, curriculum and needs in order to develop a model for kindergarten in the Bangkok metropolis which will fulfill stakeholders' needs. At present, collaborative leadership is of essence. Schools cannot run without stakeholder leaders: These include the administrator, parents and teachers. They all have to work together, plan together and create the same goals, and also design kindergarten programs and school environments that fit their needs. Therefore, the understanding of the needs and expectations for kindergartens is crucial for the success of early childhood education.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To review early childhood education practices, theories and standards
2. To conduct a survey on stakeholders' leadership perceived needs of desirable kindergarten function
3. To develop a model for kindergarten in the Bangkok metropolis
4. To validate the effective ideal model for kindergarten in the Bangkok metropolis

Significance of the Study

Education has changed. Parent, teacher and administrator must share the leadership role in order to plan and work together to improve kindergarten as a whole.

The school model or approaches that have been developed for Western societies may not be effective for Thai schools. Thus, the researcher aims to develop a model that will fit Thai culture and environment in Bangkok, and be more appropriate while fulfilling the needs of stakeholders.

This research will benefit all early childhood education. It is expected that this study will result in a model that can be used in kindergarten in the Bangkok metropolis. The model must be easy to understand and can be easily implemented and applied by teachers in kindergarten classroom situations.

Scope of the Study

The research is focused on Thai kindergartens that only provide activities for children from three to six years old in the Bangkok metropolis. For the best practice population, the researcher used four main prototype schools that are in Bangkok and were advertised by the Ministry of Education as pioneer innovation schools. They are Kornkeaw (Montessori), Amartayakul (Neo-Humanist), Panyothai (Waldorf) and Roong-A-Roon(Buddhist Concept). The sample group is focused in three main stakeholders' leader roles in education: administrator, teacher and parent.

Research Methodology

This study is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research design methodologies.

Research Procedure

Objectives	Sources of Data	Data Collection and Instrument	Data Analysis	Results
1. To review the early childhood education practices, theories and standards	Documentary Sources: Interview: Founders /Administrators	Library On-line resources Innovative Prototype Schools	Literature review and interview summary Through Content Analysis (Krippendorff, 2004)	Dendrogram summary report
2. To conduct the survey on the stakeholders' leadership perceived needs of desirable kindergarten model	Previous survey research and Dendrogram summary report and Kindergarten Stakeholders: Teachers, Administrators, and Parents	Questionnaire	SPSS for Windows	Quantitative Data: Measuring efficacy of response
3. To develop a model for kindergarten in the Bangkok metropolis	Research Findings	N/A	N/A	A hypothesized model for kindergartens in the Bangkok metropolis.
4. To validate the effective model for kindergarten in the Bangkok metropolis	Stakeholders: Educators, Kindergarten Experts, Parents, KG Teachers	Meet and Discuss with expert judgment	Connoisseurship Model (Eisner, 1998)	A Model for kindergartens in the Bangkok metropolis.

Population and Sample

The first group are the founders and/or administrators from innovation kindergartens that called themselves pioneers for the theory and as a prototype kindergarten approaches. The criteria for selecting the sample are:

- 1.1. Kindergarten school in Bangkok Area
- 1.2. Only Thai and Private School recommended by Ministry of Education
- 1.3. The schools that adopted theory and present their school as a prototype of the theory in Bangkok

As the result of those three criteria, the researcher decides to choose 4 schools in Bangkok. They are

- Montessori - Kornkeaw School
- Neo-Humanist – Amartayakul School
- Waldorf – Panyothai School
- Buddhism Concept – Roong-A-Roon School

The second group was school stakeholders: kindergarten teachers, kindergarten administrators and kindergarten parents in Bangkok metropolis. Each year there are more than 100,000 students to enroll for kindergarten in Bangkok, therefore the sample size as of the study by Krejcie and Morgan Table will be 384. Since the population size is large, the researcher will cluster area according to Tambon in Bangkok

The questionnaire was sent to 1,450 samples. There were 1,376 (94.90%) respondents who answered the questionnaire.

	No. of Survey Sent	No. of Survey Returned	Return Rate%
Administrators	50	38	76%
Teachers	200	175	87.5%
Parents	1200	1163	96.92%
Total	1450	1376	94.90%

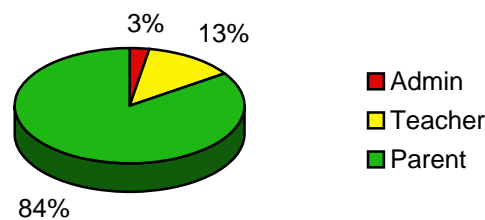


Figure 1: Percentage of sample dividing into three groups

The Instrument

Interview and Questionnaire

Validity and Reliability

In order to check the validity, the statistic experts from ABAC poll, the researchers advisor and the expert from early childhood area were consulted. Through the review of theories and research findings, the preliminary study and framework of the study designed the first draft of the questionnaire was constructed. The kindergarten teachers and university professors were consulted to assess the content validity prior to its reliability trial. One hundred and twenty parents were randomly selected from Queen Sirikij to tryout the first draft of questionnaire, however, only eighty-four were completed. Those parents were not in the sample group. Their responses were used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The data was computed for estimating the reliability of the questionnaire.

The researcher also invited the educators, and statistic experts to ensure the validity of the questionnaire before sending out to sample group.

Finally, the researcher has done process of validate the model through connoisseurship meeting. They are five groups of representatives: administrator, educator, early childhood experts, kindergarten teacher and parent.

Results of the Study

The tables below show the stakeholder's opinion regarding what they feel for each topic of question.

Table 1: Question No.1: Kindergarten Curriculum should be...(emphasis on)

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Child Centered	581	12.60	32	25.04	147	25.59	760	14.61
2. Fun and Happy	680	12.20	24	11.82	109	11.92	813	12.13
3. Buddhism Concept	337	5.40	5	1.59	25	2.35	367	4.87
4. Connect to Nature	430	7.60	19	9.35	83	8.92	532	7.83
5. Academic for Test	452	7.80	7	3.00	54	4.37	513	7.24
6. Life Skills	805	14.80	27	14.11	116	12.64	948	14.54
7. Creative Thinking	812	15.80	31	16.23	120	14.16	963	15.60
8. Problem Solving	498	7.40	11	4.59	79	7.44	588	7.31
9. Integrated to Themes	108	1.40	11	4.94	40	4.14	159	1.86
10. Music and Sport	583	8.50	11	4.59	39	3.19	633	7.69
11. Learning by Doing	206	2.80	5	2.12	28	2.05	239	2.65
12. Innovation	274	3.60	6	2.62	34	3.23	314	3.49
13. Others	11	0.20	-	-	-	-	11	0.18

In summary for the first question (What kindergarten curriculum should emphasize?), the first four of the answers were common in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Creative Thinking (963 or 15.60%) 2. Child Centered (760 or 14.61%) 3. Life Skills (948 or 14.54%) 4. Fun and Happy (813 or 12.13%) and the fifth favorable outcome is Connect to Nature (532 or 7.83%)

Table 2: Question No.2: Kindergarten Activities should be...(emphasis on)

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Good in Academic	595	10.32	3	1.58	49	5.58	647	9.47
2. Take care of oneself	878	15.23	28	14.74	123	14.01	1,029	15.06
3. Confidence in Public	718	12.45	19	10.00	108	12.30	845	12.37
4. Good and Morality	828	14.36	34	17.89	154	17.54	1,016	14.87
5. Life Skills	333	5.78	11	5.79	43	4.90	387	5.66
6. Optimistic	485	8.41	17	8.95	61	6.95	563	8.24
7. Music and Sport skills	387	6.71	7	3.68	26	2.96	420	6.15
8. Thai Wisdom	206	3.57	8	4.21	45	5.13	259	3.79
9. Problem Solving skills	410	7.11	26	13.68	98	11.16	534	7.82
10. Readiness 4 areas	667	11.57	35	18.42	149	16.97	851	12.45
11. Communicate more than 1 language	248	4.30	2	1.05	22	2.51	272	3.98
12. Others	10	0.17	-	0.00	-	0	10	0.15

In summary for the second question, the first four of the answers were common in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Take care of Oneself (1,029 or 15.06%) 2. Good and Morality (1,016 or 14.87%) 3. Readiness in 4 areas (851 or 12.45%) 4. Confidence in Public (845 or 12.37%) and the fifth favorable outcome is Good in Academic (647or 9.47%)

Table 3: Question No.3: For Thai kids, They should focus more on...

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Mathematics Skills	535	11.55	7	4.95	53	6.80	535	9.26
2. Communication Skill (English)	819	17.61	16	7.60	68	7.90	819	14.18
3. Explore and Experiment	392	5.89	13	5.83	81	8.84	392	6.79
4. Confidence in Public	552	9.69	14	7.24	74	7.97	552	9.56
5. Creative Thinking	814	14.27	36	20.67	141	17.04	814	14.10
6. Systematic Thinking	391	5.56	28	14.84	87	9.63	391	6.77
7. Making Decision	631	10.70	10	5.30	97	11.07	631	10.93
8. Music Skills	262	3.66	8	2.47	21	1.62	262	4.54
9. Sport Skills	285	3.07	5	1.77	24	1.89	285	4.94
10. Environment Awareness	508	7.82	21	9.01	103	10.35	508	8.80
11. Morality	575	9.96	32	20.32	127	16.89	575	9.96
12. Others	11	0.20	-	-	-	-	11	0.19

In summary for the third question, there were two common answers in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Creative Thinking (814 or 14.10%) 2. Making Decision (631 or 10.93%) However, the highest frequency was Communication Skill (English) (819 or 14.18%), and the last two were Morality (575 or 9.96%) and Confidence in Public (552 or 9.56%)

Table 4: Question No.4: Kindergarten teacher should be/have..

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Kind & love kids	918	22.02	25	19.58	142	22.11	1085	21.96
2. Motivated	414	6.26	16	6.47	66	6.51	496	6.3
3. Multi skills	213	2.72	14	5.07	18	1.14	245	2.58
4. Easy communicate	558	10.01	11	5.42	53	5.57	622	9.31
5. Reinforce / Support	263	3.84	6	2.62	22	1.97	291	3.56
6. Flexible	310	4.36	12	4.37	66	5.49	388	4.51
7. Good mood	642	11.87	11	6.47	94	10.6	747	11.55
8. Patience	606	9.81	14	5.94	88	8.56	708	9.54
9. Observant skills	267	3.3	11	3.85	50	3.9	328	3.39
10. Teachership & Morality	800	15.86	32	20.63	133	19.84	965	16.51
11. Teacher Certificate	237	3.13	10	5.42	36	3.45	283	3.24
12. Good Planning	495	6.65	28	14.16	105	10.87	628	7.41
13. Others	9	0.17	-	-	-	-	9	0.14

In summary for the fourth question, there were three top common answers in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Kind and Love Kids (1,085 or 21.96%) 2. Teachership and Morality (965 or 16.51%) 3. Good Mood (747 or 11.55%) However, the last two were Patience (708 or 9.54%) and easy communicate (622 or 9.31%)

Table 5: Question No.5: Kindergarten administrator should be/have...

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Clear Vision	870	15.11	33	17.65	150	14.72	1,053	15.12
2. Leadership Capacity	849	14.75	37	19.79	156	15.31	1,042	14.96
3. In trend	484	8.41	24	12.83	111	10.89	619	8.89
4. Sense of humor and Kind	594	10.32	18	9.63	93	9.13	705	10.12
5. Organized	519	9.02	6	3.21	40	3.93	565	8.11
6. Empowering	174	3.02	17	9.09	62	6.08	253	3.63
7. Clear Communication	309	5.37	2	1.07	19	1.86	330	4.74

8. IT literate	199	3.46	2	1.07	21	2.06	222	3.19
9. Center of Community	582	10.11	15	8.02	56	5.50	653	9.38
10. Teaching Awareness	302	5.25	2	1.07	34	3.34	338	4.85
11. Punctual	306	5.32	5	2.67	27	2.65	338	4.85
12. Creative and Innovative	555	9.64	26	13.90	100	9.81	681	9.78
13. Others	14	0.24		0.00	150	14.72	164	2.36

In summary for the fifth question, there were three top common answers in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Clear Vision (1,053 or 15.12%) 2. Leadership Capacity (1,042 or 14.96%) and 3. Creative and Innovative. However, the last two were Sense of Humor and Kind and Center of Community

Table 6: Question No.6: Kindergarten environment should be/have...

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Clean and Safe	1056	28.63	38	20.00	172	19.72	1,266	18.58
2. Enough Playground	374	6.02	22	11.58	76	8.72	472	6.93
3. Proper Size and Enough Toilet	456	6.06	18	9.47	88	10.09	562	8.25
4. Sport Facility	352	5.96	5	2.63	18	2.06	375	5.50
5. Swimming Pool	162	2.36	2	1.05	7	0.80	171	2.51
6. Soft Playland	178	2.25	5	2.63	20	2.29	203	2.98
7. Nature landscape	510	8.49	27	14.21	95	10.89	632	9.28
8. Nutrition Food	698	11.52	27	14.21	130	14.91	855	12.55
9. Computer Lab	324	5.34	3	1.58	19	2.18	346	5.08
10. Science Lab	201	2.63	20	10.53	101	11.58	322	4.73
11. Open Air, Greenery	417	6.24	2	1.05	18	2.06	437	6.41
12. Air Condition	113	1.5	2	1.05	15	1.72	130	1.91
13. Parking Available	126	1.73	6	3.16	19	2.18	151	2.22
14. Nurse Office	322	4.23	3	1.58	29	3.33	354	5.20
15. Pets Bug Control	457	6.94	10	5.26	65	7.45	532	7.81
16. Others	5	0.09	-	0.00	0	0.00	5	0.07

In summary for the sixth question, there were three top common answers in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Clean and Safe (1,266 or 18.58%) 2. Nutrition Food (1,042 or 14.96%) and 3. Nature Landscape (532 or 7.81%). However, the last two were Open Air & Greenery and Pets Bug Control

Table 7: Question No.7: Main factors for selecting kindergarten...

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Tuition	851	14.81	25	13.09	125	14.42	1001	14.71
2. Administrator	360	6.26	11	5.76	47	5.42	418	6.14
3. School Environment	769	13.38	33	17.28	141	16.26	943	13.86
4. Curriculum and Activities	680	11.83	32	16.75	133	15.34	845	12.42
5. Theory and Approach	343	5.97	11	5.76	45	5.19	399	5.86
6. Ratio Teacher/Student	261	4.54	11	5.76	42	4.84	314	4.61

7. Teacher	619	10.77	19	9.95	96	11.07	734	10.79
8. Media and Materials	600	10.44	8	4.19	42	4.84	650	9.55
9. Distance from Home	629	10.94	25	13.09	92	10.61	746	10.96
10. IT & Technology	224	3.90	2	1.05	26	3.00	252	3.70
11. Recommendation	133	2.31	2	1.05	14	1.61	149	2.19
12. Student Achievement	272	4.73	12	6.28	64	7.38	348	5.11
13. Others	6	0.10	-	0.00	-	0.00	6	0.09

In summary for the seventh question, there were five top common answers in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Tuition (1,011 or 14.71%) 2. School Environment (943 or 13.86%) and 3. Curriculum and Activities (845 or 12.42%) 4. Teacher (734 or 10.79%) and 5 Distances from Home (746 or 10.96%)

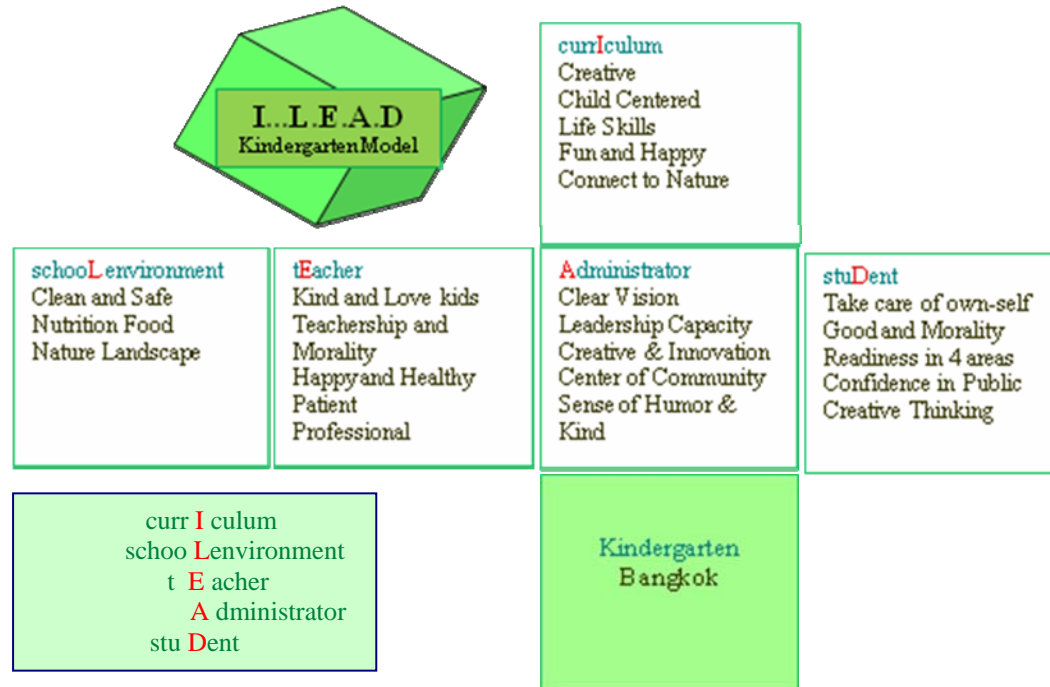
Table 8: Question No.8: Kindergarten in Bangkok should follow...

	Parents		Administrator		Teachers		All	
	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%	FQC	%
1. Montessori	486	8.43	17	10.99	98	13.12	601	10.49
2. Waldorf	336	5.83	13	7.21	44	4.8	393	6.14
3. Neo Humanist	707	12.26	20	14.77	88	12.1	815	14.31
4. Reggio	634	11.00	18	11.17	119	15.73	771	12.88
5. Whole Language	682	11.83	15	9.73	67	7.11	764	11.39
6. Story Line	357	6.19	12	5.77	49	5.14	418	5.81
7. Brain-based	648	11.24	15	7.93	77	8.02	740	10.62
8. High-Scope	406	7.04	14	7.21	79	8.51	499	6.31
9. Project Approach	222	3.85	14	6.85	52	4.88	288	3.41
10. Buddhism Concept	386	6.69	11	3.42	57	4.8	454	5.21
11. Multiple Intelligence	648	11.24	22	9.37	94	9.87	764	9.78
12. Integrated Learning	251	4.35	14	5.58	55	5.92	320	3.62
13. Others	3	0.05	-	-	-	-	3	0.03

In summary for the eighth question, there were two top common answers in all respondents relatively. There are: 1. Neo-Humanist (815 or 14.31%) and 2. Reggio (771 or 12.88%) However, there were three more that were not consensus: 1. Whole Language (764 or 11.39%) 2. Brain-based (740 or 10.62%) and 3 Montessori (601 or 10.49%)

Conclusion

As the results of the study, the findings show that a model for kindergarten in Bangkok that fits best for all leaders would be as figure below:



Recommendations

This research finding will be of benefit to early childhood education approaches; the results will lead and improve early childhood education and Thai kindergartens in Bangkok, Thailand

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are made to Thai Kindergarten administrators, educators and researchers:

1. This model could apply to all kinds of kindergarten. It doesn't matter which theory or approach that the school has followed.
2. This should be studied further in a wider scope of population. This could be done in other parts of Thailand or Thailand as a whole or with bilingual and international schools.
3. Another main stakeholder who is very important was missing. A future study could focus only on students.

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