

Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Educational Quality Assurance

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to study factors affecting the effectiveness of educational quality assurance, and 2) to compare factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance in different school sizes and to analyze those factors. The samples were 1,128 administrators and teachers from 33 schools under The Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32, selected by Stratified Random Sampling. A questionnaire was used as a research instrument and its reliability was at 0.95. The statistical analyses used in this study were percentage, mean, standard deviation, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), and Stepwise Discriminant Analysis. The results showed that the factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance were in a high level. The first three factors ranging from high to low average scores were human resources factor, leadership factor, and teamwork factor. It was also found that different school sizes had different factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance and the statistical significance was at a .01 level. There were two factors: attitude factor and teamwork factor that could classify standardized and non-standardized schools.

Keywords : Factor, Effectiveness, Quality Assurance

Introduction

Thailand has managed basic education in terms of quality according to national education plan that regulates policies in educational quality development, and learning and teaching development including personal development. Moreover, the government sectors apply educational quality development plans to improve learners and learning procedures. However, these development plans are not successful as expected. It is criticized that Thailand educational management is terrible. The survey on people's attitudes towards educational management reveals that 60.56% of people are not satisfied with the educational management in Thailand. Thailand educational

management is poor, expensive, and there is no control in educational standard which leads to inaccessibility in education (Chiengkul, W, 1999 : 15).

The survey mentioned above is the reflection from people who are not satisfied with the government educational management that lacks standard regulation or indicators in practices and constant monitoring of evaluation. Furthermore, the development is successful in expanding education in terms of quantity such as area expanding to construct buildings, and durable goods purchasing. However, in terms of quality, it is found to be critical issue of Thailand education system (Juntawanit and Jampong, 1999 : 2-12).

Quality assurance is regulated in Section 6: standard and quality assurance, Article 47 in the 1999 National Education Act. The quality assurance is needed to develop educational quality and standard. The quality assurance then is an important mechanism in educational quality development which assures that every learner will be given quality education from standard institutes as regulated in a basic education curriculum. Article 48 states that internal quality assurance in education is a part of educational management that all institutes have to practice continuously. The annual report needs to be proposed to the original affiliation and opened to publics. Article 49 regulates that every institute must be acquired quality assurance from outside sectors at least once in every five year and reports the evaluation result to related sectors and publics (Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development, 2001 : 3). Therefore, the Ministry of Education has regulated quality assurance plan by encouraging related sectors responsible for basic education to carry out quality assurance in education.

Although government policy emphasizes on quality assurance, most institutes' operations are not successful. The result of the first external quality assessment conducted by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization or ONESQA) shows 12,167 standardized schools (34.61%) and 22,992 non-standardized schools (65.39) from 35,159 schools in total (Matichon Newspaper issued on 19 August 2008, p.5). In the third external quality assessment (primary and secondary level), there were 31,797 evaluated schools and 19,570 schools are certified (61.55%) from 32,936 schools of all the country (The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment, 2015 : 11-21) Moreover, from the third external quality assessment report of basic education in 66 schools under the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32 on 16 February 2014, it is found that 50 schools are certified by ONESQA (75.76%) and 16 schools are not certified (24.24%) (The Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32, 2015 : 13). The external assessment mentioned above indicates that some schools are not certified by ONESQA at educational service area or at national level. It would be necessary for related sectors to examine and carry out quality assurance in education.

In reviewing related literature and studies on internal quality assurance, most researches focus on planning and improving quality assurance system in the institutions. According to the fact that quality assurance is a new issue in practice at the beginning of the enactment of the 1999 National Education Act especially in basic education institutions. From one-year and one-year and six-month evaluation (Wongwanit S, 2001 : 32) after the 1999 National Education Act has been legislated; there is an improvement in quality assurance in terms of policy. However, from surveying, it is found that a lot of administrators and teachers concerned that the quality assurance in the educational institutions is troubling, confused, worrying, and there still are many issues that needed the answer. They also perceive the quality assurance as their workloads (Kaewdang R, 2001 : 18). Nonetheless, every institution could not avoid internal quality assurance. Not only they have to carry out internal assessment efficiently, but also they need to prepare for external assessment which could be assured that the institutions provide standardized quality learning and teaching. Thai learners, therefore, will be coped with ability, and happiness in order to help create peaceful, sustainable, and strong economic society and can cooperate and compete with other countries with dignity. As a consequence, the internal quality assurance is important for the institutions (The Office of National Education Commission, 2000 : 21).

From Introduction, significance of the study, and related literature review on quality assurance in education, the researchers are interested to study factors affecting educational quality assurance of schools under the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32. The results of this study could be used as the guidelines in planning, developing strategies, and supporting effective quality assurance for schools, affiliations, and related sectors.

Objectives

1. To study factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance
2. To compare factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures from different school sizes
3. To analyze factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance

Research Hypotheses

1. Different school sizes affect the effectiveness of educational quality assurance differently
2. At least one factor affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance can classify standardized and non-standardized schools.

Methods

1. Population and Samples

The populations in this research were 3,088 administrators and teachers of schools under the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32 in academic year 2016.

The samples were 1,401 administrators and teachers of schools under the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32 in academic year 2016 selected by stratified random sampling.

2. Data Collection Tools

The 5-rating scale questionnaire used in this study was created according to the framework. It was divided into 2 parts: general information of the participants and the questions about six factors affecting the effectiveness of educational quality assurance. Those six factors were leadership, teamwork, attitudes, motivation, budget, and human resource management.

The questionnaire was examined and approved by advisors, and later edited according to their advice. Then the questionnaire was inspected to find its content validity by examining the accordance between items and glossary of the studied factors, the overall meaning of items, and clarity of the language. If the average of the accordance was between 0.50-1.00, it could be confirmed that the item could be later used. The result from the experts showed that 36 items had the IOC (Index of Item-Objective Congruence) between 0.60-1.00. After that, the questionnaire was tried out with 60 administrators and teachers in schools under the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32 who were not in the sample group. The item discrimination (r_{xy}) of the questionnaire was between 0.32-0.79. The reliability of the whole questionnaire was 0.95 and in each dimension was between 0.81-0.95.

3. Data Collection Procedures

The document in requiring for data collection of administrators and teachers were issued from Graduate School, Buriram Rajabhat University to the Head of the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32. The returned questionnaire would keep by Supervision, Monitoring, and Evaluation for Educational Provision Group, the Secondary Educational Service Area Office 32. The 1,401 questionnaires were sent by mail to 33 sampled schools and 1,128 questionnaires were returned with the percentage of 80.51.

4. Data analysis

4.1 Calculating frequency and percentage from the questionnaire of general information of participants

4.2 Calculating mean and standard deviation

4.3 Calculating simple correlation and significance of the correlation coefficient

4.4 The data were analyzed and compared as follows:

4.4.1 To compare factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance in terms of different school sizes by applying Multivariate Analysis of Variance (One-way MANOVA) with Lambda technique (Λ) of Wilks' Lambda distribution to calculate F-test according to Rulon and Brooks.

4.4.2 To discriminate factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance by using Stepwise Discriminant Analysis according to Wilks' Lambda distribution.

Results

1. Teachers from small standardized schools indicated that factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance were at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.75$). Five factors were at high level and one factor was at moderate level. Teachers from non-standardized schools perceived factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance at moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.09$) with high level of four factors and moderate level of two factors

Teachers from standardized medium schools considered factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.72$). Five factors were at high level and one factor was at moderate level. For teachers from non-standardized schools, they indicated factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.76$). Five factors were at high level, and one factor was at moderate level.

Teachers from standardized large school indicated that factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance were at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.66$). Also, all six factors were at high level. For teachers from non-standardized schools, they considered factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.94$) and in each factor was also at high level.

Teachers from all three sizes of schools perceived factors affecting the overall effectiveness of quality assurance at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.75$). Five factors were at high level and one factor was at medium. The averages of factors ranging from high to low were human resources management factor ($\bar{X} = 4.05$), leadership factor ($\bar{X} = 3.79$), teamwork factor ($\bar{X} = 3.73$) motivation factor ($\bar{X} = 3.72$), and attitudes factor ($\bar{X} = 3.68$). The factor that was at medium level was budget factor ($\bar{X} = 3.50$).

2. Schools with different sizes had different factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance with statistical significance at .01.

3. There were two variables that discriminate standardized and non-standardized schools in quality assurance. The attitudes variable (X_3) was applied to analyze at the first step and then teamwork variable (X_3) was used in the second step with statistical significance at .01.

Discussion

1. The factors affecting the overall effectiveness of educational quality assurance were at high level except the budget factor which was at medium level. The factors ranging from high to low were human resource management, leadership, teamwork, motivation, and attitudes.

1.1 Human resource management factor

A person with good attitudes towards his/her work, having responsibility in doing the job, and realizing and understanding educational quality assurance mostly affected the procedures in quality control system. This was complied with (Ted, P. E, 1993 : 17-24) that human factor was crucial in quality assurance. It was highlighted that even though quality assurance always focused on organizational management, the excessively emphasized on the system and methods without realizing how important human, the practitioner, is could be taken as failure.

1.2 Leadership factor

The leadership factor affected educational quality assurance comprised clear vision, ability to work with both inside and outside personals, strong decision with information, determination in quality assurance, skills in planning, following, and evaluating work. The leader should motivate staff to work effectively and encourage staff, parents, and community to participate in learning management of schools. It was in accordance with (Moorhead, G. & Griffin, R, 1998 : 558-560) and that the support from top executive was an important factor towards success because cooperation in an organization needed control and problem-solving of administrators (Goetsch, D. L. & Davis, S, 1995 : 179-181).

1.3 Teamwork factor

Schools that appointed the committee in educational quality assurance and clearly assigned responsibilities to the staff could affect educational quality assurance. The flexibility of administration led to cooperation in decision making of staff and teamwork which helped fast communication in the organization. These were in line with (Taylor, A. & Hill, F, 1993 : 12-21) study that mentioned about TQM in educational organization. The core factor that support the procedures was organizational factors which consisted of organic (organization structure and cultures), and total quality management (TQM) that focused on a person. Therefore, human resource management would be important.

Furthermore, the results of this study were in line with (Uaewong, K, 2003 : 9) study The study aimed to analyze supportive and obstructed factors towards educational quality assurance of basic educational organizations. It was found that three internal factors highly supported the quality assurance were leadership factor, organizational culture factors, and personal factors. The external factors that highly supported quality assurance were politic factor. Other moderated factors were structure factor, physical factor,

equipment factor, budget factor, social factor, economic factor, and technology factor.

2. Comparison of factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance of schools with different sizes: large, medium, and small

The results revealed that different school size had different factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance with statistically significance at .01. This was in line with hypothesis I that different school sizes affect the effectiveness of educational quality assurance differently. It was also in accordance with (Kodsrikiw'S, 2003 : 1) study that examined educational quality assurance of secondary schools in Mahasarakham. The results showed that teachers from different school size had different attitudes towards overall and in each factor affecting quality assurance. The teachers from large secondary school had more operations in quality assurance than those from medium and small schools. The result is also in line with (Kaewkhwan, J, 2004 : 1) study that investigated primary schools' education quality assurance, Buached district, Surin. The study compared teachers' attitudes towards quality assurance in primary schools according to school sizes. It was found that teachers working in different school sizes had different attitudes towards quality assurance in general and in each factor with statistically significance at .05. It was affirmed that all factors studied in this research were important and truly affected quality assurance in education.

3. Discriminant analysis of factors affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance

The study founded 2 factors: attitudes factor and teamwork factor that could classify standardized and non-standardized schools. It was conformed to hypothesis II that at least one factor affecting the effectiveness of quality assurance can classify standardized and non-standardized schools.

3.1 Attitudes factor was the highest result in discriminant analysis. It was considered as the most important factor in classifying standardized and non-standardized schools in quality assurance. The attitudes factor included the readiness of staff, quality assurance knowledge and understanding. The positive attitudes of school staff would affect quality assurance in education that led to efficiency and effectiveness in the assurance. This is in accordance with (Subsatien, S, 2003 : 1) study that the factors influencing organizational effectiveness consisted of four main factors: organization, environment, personal in organization, and administrative and operational policies.

3.2 Teamwork factor was second important factor that could classify standardized and non-standardized schools in quality assurance. The teamwork factor influenced quality assurance in various ways. For example, good relationship, teamwork among school staff, mutual understanding in working, realizing the value of evaluation for improvement, and showing respectful and honored could lead to learning together. It is in accordance with the proposal of (Cuttance, P, 1994 : 56-57) about educational organization cultures

and atmosphere. It was mentioned that school culture and atmosphere supporting development included workers' acceptability towards work achievement, problem solving, and solidarity and cooperation. It was also in line with (Uaewong, K, 2003 : 57) study on analyzing supportive and obstructed factors in quality assurance of basic education. The findings showed internal factors that supported quality assurance were administrators who were determined, dedicated and seeking knowledge, good organizational culture where staff working together as a team, realizing the value of evaluation, having responsibilities in teaching and learning, and believing that quality assurance would lead to quality development in education. Besides, flexible cooperation and staff working in charge with quality assurance would be supportive factors. The external factors included supporting from community and educational committee, and law or policy that encouraged schools to operate quality assurance.

Suggestion

The Ministry of Education, Office of the Basic Education Commission, Offices of Educational Service Area or attached agencies which involve in operations of the education quality assurance system should consider these factors as basic information and as the guidelines for promoting and supporting the agencies in attachments to improve quality and efficiency of education provision in order to pass more requirements of ONESQA.

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