

Strengthening Leadership Competencies of Thai Secondary School Teachers

Chaiyot Wanutha¹, Kowat Tesaputa²,
Anan Sri-Ampai³

Abstract

The research aimed 1) to investigate components and indicators of the leadership competencies of secondary school teachers, 2) to explore the existing situations and desirable situations of secondary school teachers' leadership competencies, 3) to study the techniques to strengthen teachers' leadership competencies, 4) to develop the teacher-leadership competencies strengthening program, and 5) to find out the results of implementing the program to improve the teacher's leadership competencies. Research and development was employed, divided into five phases as follows: Phase 1 examined the components and indicators of the teacher's leadership competencies and was verified by 10 experts ; Phase 2 explored the existing situations and desirable situations of the teacher's leadership competencies by using a questionnaire to collect data from the samples of 1,008 secondary school teachers ; Phase 3 examined the appropriate techniques to enhance the teacher's leadership competencies from the same samples of phase 2 ; Phase 4 developed a program to strengthen the leadership competencies of secondary school teachers and verified program by 7 experts,

¹ Ed.D. Candidate (Educational administration and Development),
Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, Thailand

² Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, Thailand

³ Faculty of Education, Northeastern University, Thailand

and Phase 5 evaluated the results of implementing the teacher's leadership competencies enhancement program and collected data from 50 secondary school teachers.

The research results were: 1) Secondary school teachers' leadership competencies comprised four aspects and fifty indicators. 2) The existing situations of the teacher's leadership competencies under the Office of the Secondary Educational Service Areas were found to be at a high level and the desirable situations were found to be at the highest level. 3) The teacher's needs to enhance leadership competencies were continuous study, training and practice, educational trips, training, mentorship, job training, brain storming, group meetings, and seminars. 4) The teacher's leadership competencies enhancement program consisted of four modules: self-development, instructional development, providing advice and assistance to colleagues and cooperation in a development. 5) The teacher's leadership competencies after their undergoing the enhancement program were found to be at a maximum level and the teachers were satisfied about the leadership enhancement program at a very high level.

Keywords: Teacher leadership competencies, teacher leadership competencies development program

Introduction

The National Education Act 1999, revised in 2002, has set up a standard for an educational quality assurance. Its aim is to reform a learning process. The one that plays a vital role to achieve the goal is teachers. Hence it is necessary to develop the leadership competence of teachers in academic aspects as well as their conceptual adjustment and performance (Ministry of Education, 2002).

With the current states studied, it was found that the teachers, in general, lacked self-leadership and learning development. They did not improve their teaching techniques and did not strive to develop the learner-centered approach. The teachers mainly focused more on a curricular content rather than on a concept development. The teaching method mostly used by the teacher was a lecture-based one. There was no wide variety of learning activities. Learners had little or no participation in the learning and teaching process. It was the teacher who monopolized the teaching and learning activity. It was also found that the teacher had no self-leadership and lacked self-confidence in introducing new techniques in the teaching and learning process. Teachers were hesitant to decide to use new techniques. Besides, they always follow the teacher handbook instead of trying to create a curriculum and a learning plan by themselves

(Office of Ubon Ratchathani Secondary Educational Service Area 4, 2006). With the problems found, it was important that the teacher quality has to be urgently addressed as it can have an impact on learners. In this respect, the state sector and all others concerned have to cooperate and take immediate action. Having seen the importance of the issue, the Ministry of Education determined the strategies to improve educational quality with the aim to strengthen educational institutes and develop the potential of administrators and teachers.

The administrators and teachers were to be able to organize effective learning activities so that learners could learn and keep pace with the world's changing social phenomena. Emphasis was to be focused on a school-based management. A teacher capability was required to bring about learning behaviors both inside and outside the classroom. A teacher leadership is thus very essential to driving an educational development to bring a maximum efficiency. A teacher competence included the following: 1) core competence which consisted of an achievement in a performance, self-development, teamwork, ethics and teacher profession conducts ; 2) functional competence consisted of a curricular administration and learning management, a learner development, a classroom administration, an analysis and research for a learner development, a teacher leadership, relations and cooperation of communities for learning organization (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Teacher development for leadership is a human resource development inasmuch as personnel can be counted as crucial resources. Kotter (1996) viewed that a development of teacher personnel could be undertaken in various ways, for example, leadership development by organizing a training course and an intensive course. The programs or courses require the leadership as the personnel in any organization are adults, not young learners. In addition, Knowles (1980a) described an adult learning theory that, according to the theory, adults would learn only when they had considered that it was necessary. They were able to make use of their experience in learning. Adult teaching had to be based on real life experiences. Teacher development is also widely discussed in Thailand. As Wittaya-udom (2006: 45) proposed the way to develop leadership by using a participatory workshop in order to acquire a better understanding of the concept. Piriyanuwat (2006) viewed that the important thing to be considered was self-learning derived from a teacher's experiences. It is important that teachers should be provided with an opportunity to take part in determining activities for developing and evaluating themselves. So, it's necessary to strengthen teachers' leadership competencies in order to lead other teachers and students in going ahead together to improve the quality of education in schools.

Objectives

This research aimed: 1) to investigate components and indicators of the leadership competency of secondary school teachers ; 2) to explore the existing and desirable situations of the leadership competency of secondary school teachers ; 3) to examine the techniques to enhance the leadership competency of secondary school teachers ; 4) to develop the teacher- leadership competency-enhancement program of secondary school teachers ; and 5) to evaluate the results of implementing the program to strengthen secondary school teachers' leadership competency.

Methodology

Research and development (R&D) was employed for this study by using mixed- methods research to collect data through quantitative as well as qualitative techniques. This research is divided into 5 phases as follows:

Phase 1: Investigating the components and indicators of the secondary school teacher's leadership competencies.

The procedures were: 1) Analyzing principles, concepts, and theories on teacher- leadership competency ; 2) Synthesizing concepts and theories to obtain components and indicators of the teacher's leadership competencies ; and 3) Verify components and indicators of secondary school teachers' leadership competencies by 10 experts. The research instrument used was a 5-rating-scale evaluation form to evaluate the appropriateness of components and indicators of the secondary school teacher's leadership competencies.

Phase 2: Exploring the existing and desirable situations of the secondary school teacher's leadership competencies.

The procedures were: 1) Components and indicators were used to construct the questionnaire to ask about the existing and desirable situations of the secondary school teacher's leadership competencies ; 2) Collect data from 1,008 secondary school teachers to gain their opinions about the existing and desirable situations of the secondary school teacher's leadership competencies under the Office of the Secondary Educational Service Areas ; and 3) Acquired data were analyzed in order to find existing and desirable situations.

The research instrument used was a 5-rating-scales questionnaire of existing situations and desirable situations of secondary school teacher leadership competencies.

Phase 3: Studies the techniques to enhance teachers' leadership competency.

The procedures were: 1) Components and indicators were used to construct the questionnaire to ask about the needs for the techniques to strengthen the teacher's leadership competencies ; 2) The subjects were asked about needs for the techniques to strengthen the leadership competencies of the teachers under the Office of the Secondary Educational Service Areas. Acquired data were analyzed to obtain the techniques in order to enhance the teacher's leadership competencies. Research instrument used was questionnaire of the techniques' needs to enhance teacher leadership competencies.

Phase 4: Developing the program of teacher's leadership competencies.

The procedures were: 1) A study was conducted on concept and theory concerning program development of the following: concepts and theories on teachers' leadership competencies, components and indicators, adult learning and program for the teacher's leadership competency enhancement ; 2) The program development for the teacher's leadership competency consisted of the following: principles, objectives, contents and evaluation. The research instrument was the questionnaire to evaluate the propriety and suitability of teacher-leadership competencies-enhancement program.

Phase 5: Evaluation of the results of utilizing the program of teachers' leadership competency.

It involved the outcome of creating knowledge and understanding of teacher leadership competency through training and seminar and integrating the program with performance. The research instruments were tests to evaluate knowledge and understanding of teachers in leadership competencies and a questionnaire to evaluate teacher-leadership competencies before and after entering the program.

Results

1. Components and indicators of the teacher-leadership competencies were found as follows:

There are four components and fifty indicators of teacher-leadership competencies.

The first component is determination for self-development. This component is comprised of 15 indicators: 1) teacher professional development, 2) the seeking of knowledge, science, techniques, and Information for self-development, 3) attending training seminars to enhance knowledge and experience, 4) development of mindfulness, 5) development of emotions and emotional intelligence, 6) development of social skills, 7) temper control and management of problems, 8) creativity of vision, 9) conversion of vision into practice, 10) having positive attitude for a focused and better approach, 11) self-behavioral attitude, driven by the support of management and school, 12) self-practice and development, 13) self-confidence and success, 14) management against the context of the barrier environment to success, and 15) teacher-professional maturity

The second component is commitment to develop learning and teaching. This component was comprised of 13 indicators, such as 1) developing a variety of techniques to use in teaching 2) manufacturing and implementing innovation into teaching, 3) managing teaching aimed at the achievement of learners, 4) having inspiration in learning to students, 5) improvement of the classroom to facilitate teaching performance, 6) having media and learning materials that promote learning, 7) dedication to education and research, 8) having a broad knowledge and depth in the science of teaching. 9) having measurable evaluation of student performance to determine actual performance, 10) evaluating skills of students continually, 11) evaluation of the development of students in physical, emotional, social, and intellectual aspects, 12) assessing the activities of student development, 13) applying the results of the assessment with respect to the development of students.

The third component is advice and assistance for colleagues. This component is comprised of 10 indicators: 1) planning of teaching 2) teaching pedagogy, 3) technical methods of teaching 4) introduction of the study support 5) modern technology to support and develop academics, 6) guidance for military, boy-scout, girl-scout, and red-cross activities, 7) guidance for special-interest activities, 8) guidance for ethical activities, 9) guidance for development and advancement of the teaching profession, 10) advising other teachers on discipline and professional ethics.

The fourth component is cooperation in development. This component is comprised of 12 indicators: 1) vision in development in conjunction with other teachers, 2) listening and accepting comments from the common vision, 3) creating inspiration, stimulating of intellectual use for the team to create new concepts and ways for empirical results, 4) discussion, brainstorming with other teachers, 5) planning with other teachers, 6) working together with other teachers, 7) networking with other teachers, 8) cooperating with other teachers,

9) developing into a professional teacher under an atmosphere of mutual learning, 10) meeting for knowledge exchange with parent organization and local community, 11) coordinating with parents to improve education quality and school, 12) undertaking collaborative funding as mobilized for education and development.

2. Existing situations of teacher-leadership competencies were on the whole at a high level. When each component was considered it was found that all aspects were at a high level as well. The desirable situations to enhance the teacher leadership competencies were at the very high level and when each aspect was considered, it was found that all aspects were also at the very high level, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Existing situations and desirable situations of teacher-leadership competencies

Components of teacher leadership competencies	Existing situations			Desirable situations		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Existing level	\bar{X}	S.D.	Desirable level
1. Determination for self- development	3.96	0.62	High	4.82	0.21	Very high
2. Determination to develop learning and teaching	3.83	0.94	High	4.80	0.43	Very high
3. Providing assistance to fellow teachers	3.74	0.51	High	4.80	0.43	Very high
4. Cooperation for development	3.56	0.55	High	4.81	0.46	Very high
Totals	3.76	0.72	High	4.81	0.44	Very high

Note: criteria for mean interpretation was categorized as very high when the mean is ranged from 4.51-5.00, high when the mean is ranged from 3.51-4.50, moderate when the mean is ranged from 2.51-3.50, low when the mean is ranged from 1.51-2.50, and very low when the mean is ranged from 1.00-1.50.

3. Needs of techniques to develop the teacher-leadership competencies in three orders of ranking from high to low such as: practicum, school visit, and training as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Needs of the techniques to develop the teacher leadership competencies

Techniques to develop the teacher leadership competencies														
Components of teacher leadership competencies	Training	Workshop	Case study	School visit	Coaching	Provided education	Brainstorming	Group discussion	Administrative game	Seminar	Mentorship	Recreational activities	Self-study	Practicum
	1. Intention of developing themselves	58.5	57.5	61.5	80.5	53.5	51.5	52.5	60.5	55.5	50.5	59.5	56.5	85.2
2. Intention in developing learning and teaching	80.5	56.5	59.5	75.5	52.5	79.5	54.5	51.5	57.5	49.5	53.5	50.5	55.5	58.5
3. Providing advice to fellow teachers	71.5	67.5	70.5	63.5	80.5	62.5	69.5	60.5	65.5	64.5	85.5	68.5	66.5	76.5
4 Cooperation on developing	75.5	72.5	67.5	71.5	65.5	70.5	82.5	80.5	74.5	80.2	66.5	64.5	68.5	73.5
Totals	71.5	63.5	64.7	72.5	63.0	66.1	64.7	63.5	63.2	66.1	66.2	60.0	68.9	72.5

4. Results of the teacher leadership competencies program development consisted of:

4.1 The program principles were developed based on the components and indicators of the teacher-leadership competencies, an integration of contents and a wide variety of methods as commensurate with the subject matter.

4.2 The objectives of the program were: to develop teacher knowledge and abilities of intention of developing themselves, intention in developing learning and teaching, providing advice to fellow teachers, and cooperation on development.

4.3 The teacher-leadership competencies program contents were divided into four modules: Module 1 Intention of developing themselves (self-development) ; Module 2 Intention in developing learning and teaching ; Module 3 providing advice to fellow teachers ; and cooperation on developing. All modules are shown in Figure 1.

Activities of the teacher-leadership competencies program under the office of Secondary Education Service Area

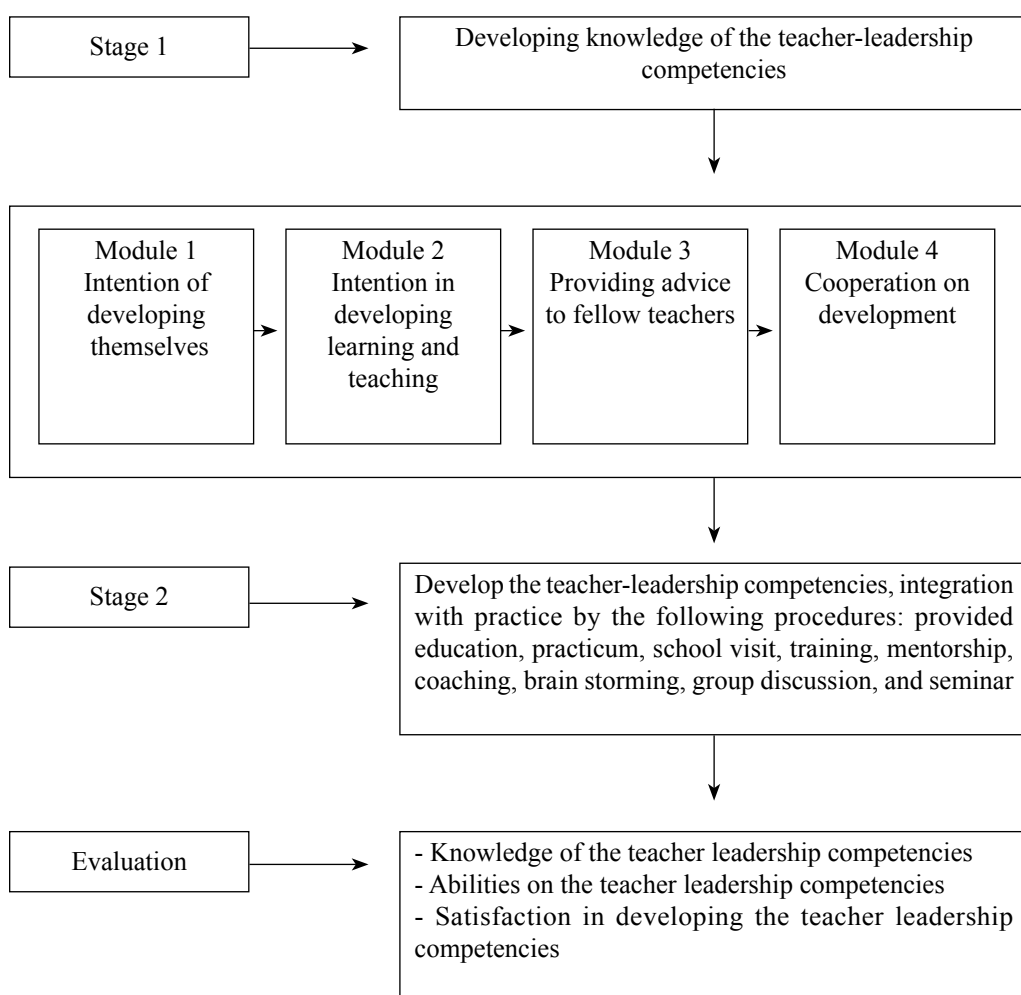


Figure 1: The program to strengthen the leadership competencies of secondary school teachers

The program was evaluated by using the following: the test to examine knowledge and understanding of the teacher-leadership competencies, an evaluation form, and a satisfaction questionnaire. All stages deal with the results of using the program in question to develop the teacher-leadership competencies. Statistical analysis revealed significant results as follows: 1) It was found that the test scores on knowledge concerning the teacher-leadership competencies after were higher than before with a statistical significance of .05. It indicated that after the teachers partook of the teacher-leadership competencies program in question, they had a higher knowledge of teacher-leadership competencies. 2) An evaluation of the teacher-leadership competencies was found to be at the very high level. 3) The satisfaction in the teacher-leadership competencies enhancement program in terms of the contents was at a high level, and in terms of the activities at a high level as well.

Discussion

The main results of this research will now be discussed.

1. The components and indicators of the teacher-leadership competencies found in this research consisted of four components and fifty indicators, which were derived from an analysis and synthesis of several scholars and educators such as Stogdill (1974), Fullan (1994), Leithwood & Steinbach (1999), Snell & Swanson (2000), Suranna & Moss (2002), York-Barr & Duke (2004), Crowther & Hann (2009), Katzenmeyer & Moller (2009), Ratchapat (2011). These components and indicators are verified by experts who have knowledge and experience about teacher competencies to find suitability of components and indicators of teacher-leadership competencies.

2. Existing situations of the teacher-leadership competencies were at all at a high level. When each component was considered it was found that all aspects were at a high level as well. The desirable situations to enhance the teacher-leadership competencies were at the very high level and when each aspect was considered, it was found that all aspects were also at the very high level. This is because secondary school teachers were intended to develop themselves and belong to the school, educational service area, and the Office of Basic Education Commission. However, secondary school teachers need to develop more on their leadership competencies in order to meet the vast and rapid changes taking place. According to Jansiri (2008), a study was conducted on the guidelines to be used as an enhancement. Concepts and academic theories were studied on how to construct the strategies to enhance the leadership competencies of the teachers under the Office of the Secondary Educational Service Areas. As a result, a good guideline in response to the teachers' needs was acquired. Also these techniques were used to obtain efficient leadership competencies (Guskey, 2002 ; Murphy, 2005).

3. Of the activities organized to promote the teacher-leadership competencies, the following were carried out. Needs-assessment was essential in the first step as it could help to know the information necessary to design the activity for maximum benefit. Three aspects of assessment were determined as follows: 1) An organizational assessment was made by examining the organizational goals including varying trends which could affect the goals. Besides, assessment also examined the organizational atmosphere and surveyed existing resources, 2) A work analysis indicated what the performers had to do, and how and why they had to do it. The issue included instrument and working environment, 3) A personal analysis led to knowledge of at what level individual performers had understanding and ability. An analysis of the personnel was essential as it made us aware of the individuals' ability. Finally, data derived from the needs analysis were used to determine the objectives, which were the direction of designing contents and substance, activities and guidelines. Finally, choosing and designing the activities leading to the desired goals: It was a delicate process which required a proper consideration. Thus, it was important to know the principles of learning and wisely choose the media suitable for the recipients. The aim was to bring about a maximum profit.

4. Process implementation for teachers who were given training assumes knowledge of the teacher-leadership competencies. The activities in this process should be conducive to motivation, self-development and supervision, awareness of mission and duties, elements of knowledge, social interaction, analysis and synthesis via different activities. Participants should be engaged in the learning process. Also, a demonstration was important as it could be a concrete example for the teachers. Specifically, Stage Two determined the activities oriented toward the leadership. In this stage, there should be a continuous assistance, particularly on-the-job learning and on-the-job supervision. The teachers were required to plan and revise the principles learned from stage 1. It was a kind of relearning and drills. The process in question contributed to a clear understanding. Knowledge acquired was durable and deep as far as teacher-leadership competence was concerned. In this respect, the teachers became researchers pursuing ways to solve problems. Activities for development came from their needs. So, the enhancement in this stage began by stating needs, necessity, planning, and operation according to the plan and the evaluation.

The developed activities targeted at guiding one's self and others by means of coaching, and feedback. The program in the study was a friendly one. The teachers who took part would be given advice, counseling, and feedback in a creative manner. In addition, the teachers were given good support and morale, which could have a positive effect on the leadership development. The benefits and values were considered as the utmost goals. Whether the implementation

was successful or not, depended on the goals set. If the results were not achieved or lower than expected, it was important to use data to analyze and plan for the future. It was found that the developed program could help create knowledge and understanding of the teacher leadership competence.

As regards knowledge and understanding of the teacher-leadership competence, it was found that the teachers who were trained by the developed program had a higher understanding of leadership. The test scores on knowledge of leadership before and after the enhancement were higher. Based on the implementation according to the process of the program, stage one focused its attention on the teachers' knowledge and understanding of leadership and theories and elements of knowledge, so that these could be used to develop and supervise one's self ; to bring about an awareness of missions ; to know roles and duties of being the teacher who was equipped with leadership competence. The teachers of that level of competence should be able to change their behavior, to participate in the performance with enthusiasm, and to have social interaction with others, colleagues included. Furthermore, they should know how to analyze and synthesize through various activities.

As a consequence, the teachers who were given an enhancement developed a better understanding of leadership competence. The finding was in accordance with the study by Knowles (1980b), who explored an adult learning theory. The theory as proposed was divided into six concepts: 1) The need to know: adults would enter the learning process only when they found the reason as to why they had to learn whereas children wanted to learn only just to pass or to score higher points. 2) The learner's self-concept: adults had more self-concepts than children. Hence they could use judgment to make different decisions by themselves. On the contrary, young learners were not clear and not certain about various issues. Thus, they found it necessary to rely on those they had recognized and trusted for advice before making any decision. 3) The role of experience: adults could use their own experience as resources in learning. The more experienced the adults were, the faster they could learn. In contrast, if the experience was different from what was newly learned, it might be an obstacle to learning. The learning process might be slow thanks to one's failure to accept new things. Child learners who were less experienced might learn slower. They might also find it problematic to link their acquired experience with learning.

Readiness to learn: naturally adults were more prepared to learn than children as the former were more mature. Additionally, they would become more ready if they knew that what they were to learn could be useful to them or their jobs. On the contrary, children were willing to learn only when they were told to learn. 5) Orientation to learning: real situations from life were suitable for adult learners. They could accept and learn things only when they were consistent with

incidents or situations they were facing whereas children could perform better when the teacher emphasized the content. 6) motivation: adults wanted to learn due to internal drives. For example, some of them learned just to fulfill their expectation in life, some wanted success in their life to increase more confidence. However, children learned to be rewarded or get words of praise.

The teachers leadership competence: activities were determined to focus on the competence, practical skills, on-the-job learning, and on-the-job-supervision. The teachers were required to plan and revise principles derived from Stage 1. It was a re-learning and skill practice which could help teachers to develop better understanding. Teachers could present continuous advice, help, and feedback to colleagues. Such a process led to clearer understanding. Knowledge gained from that process was more durable and profound. Supervision, follow-up, and evaluation opened the opportunity for the teacher to raise questions. The researcher allowed supervision by means of coaching to bring about a common learning and participation in determining the activities of development based on the needs of the teachers. In brief, an enhancement in this stage began with specification of needs, necessity, planning, action and evaluation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. There were four main components with fifty indicators of the teacher-leadership competencies. So, the secondary school, the Educational Service Area, and the Office of Basic Education Commission should find excellent techniques to develop secondary school teacher- leadership competencies on more strengthened levels.

2. Existing situations of the teacher-leadership competencies in four components were at a high level, while desirable situations were at a very high level. It's indicated that teacher leadership competencies still need to develop to achieve higher degrees of leadership competencies. Organizational bodies involved should realize this point and try to create projects that strengthen teacher-leadership competencies.

3. Techniques used to increase teacher-leadership competencies consisted of training, workshop, case study, educational visit, coaching, continuous education, brainstorming, small group discussion, administrative games, seminar, mentorship, recreational activities, self-study, and practice designed by providing various activities. Each technique had different point strengths and weaknesses. So, an analysis of internal and external contexts affecting teacher- leadership competencies was necessity. So, before implementing some kind of technique at schools, the individual school should provide opportunities to teachers in terms of collaboration.

4. The results of using the program in the study were as follows: 1) understanding of teacher-leadership competency was established. The teacher had a better understanding of leadership competencies, 2) The teachers' leadership competencies after their undergoing the enhancement program was found to be at a very high level, 3) The teachers were satisfied with the leadership-enhancement program at a very high level. So, the secondary school, the office of educational service area, and the Office of basic Education Commission should implement teacher-leadership competencies program to develop secondary school teachers.

References

- Crowther, F., Ferguson, M., & Hann, L. (2009). *Developing teacher leaders: How teacher leadership enhances school success*. Corwin Press.
- Fullan, M. (1994). *The meaning of educational change*. New York: Teacher College Press, Columbia University.
- Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 8 (3), 381-391.
- Jansiri, W. (2008). *Development of competence of supportive administrators in the state-run university*. Thesis: Mahasarakham University. (in Thai).
- Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2009). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders*. Corwin Press.
- Knowles, M. (1980a). How do you get people to be self-directed learning. *Training and development Journal*, 4, 239-254.
- Knowles, M. (1980b). *The modern practice of adult education from pedagogy to andragogy*. New York: The Adult Education Company.
- Kotter, J.P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2002). *National education act 1999 B.E revised (2nd edition)*. Bangkok: Teachers Council.
- Murphy, J. (Ed.). (2005). *Connecting teacher leadership and school improvement*. Corwin Press.
- Office of Ubon Ratchathani Secondary Educational Service Area 4 (2005). *Reports of supervision*. Ubon Ratchathani: Ubonsarn. (in Thai).
- Piriyanuwat, S. (2006). *Learning reform to a sustainable educational quality assurance*. Chiang mai: Chiang mai University. (in Thai).

- Ratchapat, A. (2011). *A development of indicators of the leadership of the teachers in the basic education institutes*. Ph.D. Thesis: Khon Kaen University. (in Thai).
- Snell, J., & Swanson, J. (2000). *The essential knowledge and skills of teacher leaders: A search for a conceptual framework*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Stogdill, Ralph M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership*. New York: Free Press.
- Suranna, K. J., & Moss, D. M. (2002). *Exploring leadership in the context of teacher preparation*. Paper presented at the 83rd Annual American Educational Research Association Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- Wittaya-udom, W. (2006). *Leadership*. Bangkok: Cytex Press. (in Thai).
- York-Barr, J., & Duke, K. (2004). "What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship", *Review of Educational Research*, 74 (3), 255-316.

