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THE ROLE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN MANAGING LEARNING RESOURCES WITHIN THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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Abstract

The role of school administrators is crucial in creating and developing an appropriate and effective learning environment within the school. This ensures that students receive a quality education and are prepared to become individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to face the outside world. This article focuses on exploring the roles and responsibilities of school administrators in managing learning resources within the school. The process of managing and organizing learning resources consists of three important steps: 1) planning and implementing the plan, 2) monitoring, evaluating, and improving the management, and 3) managing and developing the quality of education to a higher level. This supports meaningful learning and student skill development. This academic article aims to analyze the role of school administrators in managing learning resources within the educational institution. Data was collected from academic documents, books, and academic articles. The research found that administrators need to play five important roles in managing learning resources: 1) planning, 2) creating academic networks, 3) supporting learning media, 4) developing information resources, and 5) evaluating and developing. When administrators understand the importance of managing learning resources within the educational institution, it leads to the creation of a learning environment that is full of support and promotes the development of skills necessary for student development in the present and future.

Keywords: Educational Administrator's Role, Learning Resources, Learning Resources Management

Introduction

The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and its Amendments (No. 3), B.E. 2553 (2010), Section 4 states that "Education" means the learning process that promotes the development of individuals and society through the transmission of knowledge, training, cultural continuity, the fostering and promotion of academic progress, and the creation of knowledge by organizing a conducive environment, social learning, and supportive factors that enable individuals to engage in continuous lifelong learning. Chapter 4, Section 22 emphasizes that education must adhere to the principle that all learners have the ability to learn and develop themselves. Learners are regarded as the most important aspect of education. Educational processes must promote the learner's development in accordance with their natural potential and full capacity. Section 24 (4) mandates that teaching and learning must integrate various subject matter in a balanced and proportionate manner, as well as instill virtues, positive values, and desirable characteristics in all subjects. Section 24 (5) encourages and supports teachers in creating learning environments, providing materials, and facilitating learning to ensure that students acquire knowledge and become well-rounded individuals. Research is to be incorporated as part of the learning process, where both teachers and students may learn together from a variety of educational media and knowledge sources. Section 25 requires the

state to promote the operation and establishment of all forms of lifelong learning resources, such as public libraries, museums, art galleries, zoos, public parks, botanical gardens, science and technology parks, sports and recreation centers, data centers, and other learning resources. These resources must be sufficient and efficient. Educational institutions are therefore aware of the importance of maximizing learning potential and organizing learner-centered education to ensure that students develop holistically in terms of physical, mental, emotional, social, and intellectual aspects. This fosters knowledge coupled with moral values, enabling students to live harmoniously with others and lead a fulfilling life.

"Education in the Thailand 4.0 Era" The Second Decade of Educational Reform (B.E. 2552 - 2561) focused on providing quality lifelong learning for all Thais. The primary goal was to promote the participation of all sectors of society in the management of education to achieve the vision and objectives of educational management. Educational institutions serve as critical learning centers for students, functioning as a key component in facilitating student learning according to the curriculum. Learning processes are designed to foster students' natural development and help them reach their full potential (Office of the Education Council, 2009). School administrators play a crucial role in managing learning resources. They are responsible for setting policies and plans that support and promote the development of learning resources within educational institutions. Their duties include fostering personnel development to enhance knowledge and experience in utilizing learning resources within schools, encouraging the participation of all staff in presenting projects or innovations derived from studying or using school learning resources, and supervising, monitoring, and evaluating the educational management system (Office of the Education Council, 2007).

As mentioned above, the role of school administrators in managing learning resources within educational institutions is crucial to improving the quality of education. Administrators with vision, knowledge, and dedication to the management of learning resources can lead to the enhancement of student learning quality, which ultimately impacts the future of the nation.

The definition of a role

Dang Klin-Dokkaew (2009) stated online that the term "role" refers to the powers, duties, and responsibilities related to direct work and special tasks that should be performed, or the expected behaviors for individuals in various statuses, outlining how they are to act. It is a role anticipated by groups or society.

Senge (1990, as cited in Duangkamol Kingjampa, 2012) identified key elements necessary for managing a learning organization, which are expectations that leaders aim to cultivate in their followers or subordinates through training. These elements include:

1. The leader's role in fostering systems thinking, which is expected to help followers understand the whole.
2. The leader's role in promoting personal mastery, which aims for followers to experience encouragement, acceptance, empowerment, trust, self-discovery, working for dignity, autonomy, fulfilled potential, growth, supported choice, independence, space to make mistakes, support during transitions, learning, responsibility, self/other connection, meaning, and challenging assumptions.
3. The leader's role in creating mental models, which is expected to encourage followers to pursue innovation, meaning, and challenge assumptions.
4. The leader's role in developing a shared vision, which aims for followers to feel a sense of purpose, personal/values alignment, motivation, clarity, co-development of vision, engagement, and commitment.

5. The leader's role in fostering team learning, which is expected to involve followers in co-designing, self-expression, contribution, creativity, social unity, and relationship building.

Types of Learning Resources within Educational Institutions

Kranchit Puttakosa (2011, as cited in the Department of Non-Formal Education, n.d.) discussed local learning resources in the context of informal education as education that occurs in accordance with the way of life. It involves learning from work experiences, family, media, and various knowledge sources within the community, allowing for continuous learning. These resources for public learning can be categorized into six types based on individual preferences, including:

1. Libraries include school libraries, college libraries, temple libraries, public libraries, and libraries of private organizations, among others.

2. Community Learning Networks consist of community learning centers, local agricultural offices, health stations, village reading rooms, and natural or lifestyle-based knowledge sources available in the community.

3. Mass Media includes newspapers, radio broadcasts, television, journals, magazines, newsletters, and posters, among others.

4. Local Wisdom encompasses the knowledge of experts, local sages, and cultural practices.

5. Folk Media includes songs, traditional performances (like Likay), folk plays, and Mor Lam (a type of traditional Lao and Thai music).

6. Family involves daily living, vocational activities, education, and knowledge imparted by parents, among other aspects.

Management of Learning Resources within Educational Institutions

The management of learning resources is an academic task that school administrators must ensure is carried out with quality, efficiency, and maximum benefit to learners. Therefore, the processes of managing and organizing learning resources are similar to the processes of managing academic work, which consist of three key steps: planning, implementing the plan, and supervising and evaluating to improve management, organization, and to enhance the quality of education. As such, it is outlined as follows (Tasanee Wongyeun, 2004).

1. Planning

The planning of management and organization of learning resources must take into account four key aspects, as follows:

1.1 The objectives of the basic education curriculum aim to develop Thai people into well-rounded individuals who are good, knowledgeable, happy, and possess Thai identity. They should have the potential for further education, career opportunities, and desirable characteristics according to the learning standards established by the curriculum.

1.2 The organization of management and administration of learning resources should align with the curriculum for teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation, internal supervision, personnel development, research and development, other projects, information systems, and the school's budget.

1.3 The structure and processes of education management should adhere to the principles of decentralization.

1.4 The development of strategic plans should involve collaboration with multiple stakeholders, including the school administration, teachers, the basic education institution committee, parent networks, and the community, which consists of the following steps (Suwat Siriniran, 2006).

Step 1: Assess the internal and external situations of the educational institution using the SWOT Analysis technique, which includes Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Step 2: Use the results from the SWOT analysis to determine the operational directions of the institution, including its Vision, Mission Statement, and Goals. This establishes aspirations, direction, and future success.

Step 3: Establish operational strategies as a systematic framework for implementation measures.

Step 4: Translate strategies into actions by specifying projects and activities that align with the institution's mission and address existing challenges or areas for development.

Step 5: Set criteria for evaluating success and goals by creating performance indicators.

2. Implementation of the Plan

The implementation of the plan is an activity that follows the development of strategic plans, carried out in the process of defining the institution's mission in the form of tasks, projects, or specified activities. There are two key steps for effectively implementing the plan:

2.1 Coordination of the Plan: This step aims to eliminate redundancy in tasks, integrate the content of each project's objectives, assign responsibilities, and allocate resources.

2.2 Supervision, Monitoring, and Evaluation: This step involves verifying whether the operations are aligned with the plan and identifying any obstacles encountered during implementation. This activity must be continuously performed throughout the process and involves analytical activities to assess the outcomes of the activities and the implementation plan. In the evaluation phase, the differences between the desired state and the actual state of implementation are considered to determine whether they are similar or different, which will inform decisions on whether to accept or modify the current approach.

3. Supervision, Guidance, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Supervision, guidance, monitoring, and evaluation are activities within the management process that school administrators and responsible parties must systematically plan. This involves clearly defining steps and activities for supervision, monitoring, and evaluation. The principles of supervision, monitoring, and evaluation are as follows:

Supervision is a collaborative process among supervisors, including school administrators, deputy administrators, heads of subject areas, exemplary teachers or group leaders, project heads, and teachers within the same institution. The objective is to develop responsibilities in a peer-supportive manner, utilizing the special skills of one teacher to assist others who may have less proficiency in that area. This is aimed at providing guidance in project management to achieve the specified goals effectively.

Monitoring is the process of controlling and overseeing the continuous progress of tasks/projects. It ensures that the work is completed within the designated time frame and addresses any obstacles that arise during project execution in a timely manner, thus preventing any adverse effects or deficiencies in the overall project. This is especially crucial when evaluating the project's success at the final stage.

Evaluation is a critical step in planning, as it serves as a measure to inform school administrators, planners, and all parties involved about whether the plans or projects set forth in the strategic operational framework of the institution—requiring human resources, labor, and financial costs (budget)—have achieved the expected outcomes. The evaluation assesses how well the results align with the anticipated goals, whether they are worthwhile, and whether to continue, halt, or modify the project accordingly.

Evaluation should be integrated as a component of the plan/project so that school administrators, project managers, and other stakeholders can understand the progress of the project. This enables them to verify, control, and monitor the work effectively. For practitioners, this allows them to perform their duties according to the plan, be more cautious, and be prepared for performance evaluation checks, which is also part of assessing the capability of the personnel by the management.

The Role of School Administrators in Managing Learning Resources within Educational Institutions

Rangsarak Lueamsamran (2013) noted that school administrators play a crucial role in educational management, supporting all aspects to achieve the set educational objectives. Therefore, administrators need to assume the following important roles:

1. Establish collaborative policy-making and planning regarding the procurement and development of learning materials for the school.
2. Promote and support faculty within the school by providing guidance on the development of learning materials, as well as establishing academic networks and clubs to serve as learning resources for the school.
3. Encourage the development and use of various media, focusing on creating materials that provide factual information to generate new knowledge, while seeking additional resources that enhance the school's educational effectiveness.
4. Support the development of the school library as a learning resource for both the school and the community.
5. Supervise, monitor, and evaluate the performance of staff in sourcing, producing, using, and developing learning materials, while also providing guidance to address any issues staff may encounter related to learning resources.

Conclusion

Based on the literature review mentioned above, managing learning resources is an academic task that school administrators must oversee to ensure quality, efficiency, and maximum benefit to learners. The process of managing learning resources consists of three important steps: 1. Planning and implementing the plan, 2. Supervision, monitoring, and evaluation for improving management, 3. Managing and enhancing the level of educational quality.

School administrators play a crucial role in educational management, serving as supporters in all aspects to achieve the set objectives of education. Administrators need to focus on five key areas in managing learning resources: 1. Planning, 2. Building academic networks, 3. Supporting learning media, 4. Developing information retrieval sources, 5. Evaluating and improving.

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