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## **Program to Enhance in Creative Leadership of School Administrators**

Juthawan Panthugoon

*Faculty of Education and Educational Administration and Development, Mahasarakham University, Thailand*

Thatchai Chittranun (Corresponding Author)

*Faculty of Education and Educational Administration and Development, Mahasarakham University, Thailand*

Email: [thatchai.c@msu.ac.th](mailto:thatchai.c@msu.ac.th)

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### **Abstract**

This research aimed to: (1) examine the current conditions, desirable conditions, and priority needs for enhancing the creative leadership of school administrators under the Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1; and (2) develop a program to promote creative leadership among these school administrators. The research employed a two-phase methodology. In Phase 1, the current and desirable conditions, as well as the needs for creative leadership development, were investigated among school administrators under Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1. A total of 313 administrators were selected through stratified random sampling, and data were collected using a rating-scale questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, as well as the Essential Demand Index (EDI) and the Modified Priority Needs Index (PNI<sub>modified</sub>).

In Phase 2, a creative leadership development program for school administrators was designed based on the findings from Phase 1. The program was evaluated for appropriateness and feasibility by five experts selected through purposive sampling. The research instruments included interviews and evaluation forms assessing the suitability and feasibility of the program.

The results indicated that the overall current level of creative leadership among school administrators was moderate, with flexibility and adaptability receiving the highest mean score. In contrast, the desirable level of creative leadership was rated at the highest level overall, particularly in teamwork. The priority needs for creative leadership development, ranked from highest to lowest, were teamwork, individual consideration, creativity, vision, and flexibility and adaptability.

The developed creative leadership enhancement program comprised five key components: (1) principles, (2) objectives, (3) content, (4) development methods, and (5) measurement and evaluation. The program content consisted of five modules: Module 1 – Creativity; Module 2 – Teamwork; Module 3 – Flexibility and Adaptability; Module 4 – Vision; and Module 5 – Individualized Differences. The overall evaluation results indicated that the program demonstrated the highest level of appropriateness and feasibility.

**Keywords:** Creative Leadership, Program, Administrators, Primary Education

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## 1. Introduction

The transformation of the modern world following the COVID-19 crisis has been driven by the convergence of multiple interrelated factors, including technological advancement through digital disruption, global volatility characteristic of the VUCA environment, demographic shifts associated with an aging society, and the emergence of new epidemics. Together, these forces have generated rapid and continuous changes across economic, social, industrial, and educational systems. As a result, contemporary organizational leaders are required to develop the capacity to manage complexity effectively and to ensure the sustainability of their institutions in both the present and the future.

In parallel, the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023 - 2027) outlines an educational development approach focused on enhancing the quality, equity, and efficiency of education. This includes leveraging technology for educational resource management and promoting effective lifelong learning. The advancement of digital technology and the increasing prevalence of Internet access broaden educational and learning opportunities beyond the classroom, such as distance learning, lifelong learning, and individualized potential-supportive learning. These modalities will play a vital role in meeting the rapidly changing demands of the labor market. The 13th Plan is strategically set to allow the country to overcome various challenges to achieve the vision: "Thailand is secure, prosperous, and sustainable, becoming a developed country through development based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy" (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022). In a modern world characterized by directional change, the concept of the "BANI World" offers a framework to prepare for new global phenomena and address the challenges facing the current education sector. The BANI World concept, coined by American anthropologist and human behavior researcher Jamais Cascio, goes beyond a mere "situation" that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA) to consider the emotional impact on people, such as stress, anxiety, depression, and confusion (Wisetdonwai, 2022). This concept provides executives and organizational leaders with a comprehensive view for holistic management. Consequently, managing these issues and challenges directly involves educational leaders and administrators who must understand and adapt to the ongoing changes.

The school administrator is a critically important individual who drives the administration and management of education within the institution, including the advancement and development of teachers' capabilities. A good administrator must have leadership appropriate for the current changing situation. School administrators must be able to use their influence and ability to persuade, motivate, and stimulate personnel through diverse methods, aiming for personnel to change work behaviors and generate creative new operational approaches or modern innovations that provide maximum benefit to the work and the school. They must also utilize the process of creating an innovative context to enable personnel to create innovations that add value to products and services creatively. Organizational leaders must prioritize stimulating, promoting, and developing creativity, fostering creative ideas among co-workers, and being a creative administrator themselves. (Kittisaknavin, 2011) stated that supporting organizational personnel to possess creative initiative positively influences the organizational culture, promotes individual creativity, and leads to an innovative organization for efficiency, effectiveness, and the organization's survival and growth. Therefore, effective leaders need creative skills for making sound decisions that translate ideas into action, persuading others of the idea's value, and ensuring the idea serves the collective goal (Jongvisal, 2013)

Creative Leadership is therefore of paramount importance in this era of educational change. School principals must encourage school personnel to develop Creative Thinking to continuously generate new innovations in learning for the school. This includes promoting teamwork and establishing network collaborations among the school system, parents, and the community to utilize knowledge, skills, and the output of new innovations for the benefit of school development (Wuthirong, 2012). This aligns with the concept of (Sinlarat, 2010), who stated that education should move in a direction that is more valuable and creatively beneficial to the learners and society, which will aid the country's development in the current fiercely competitive global society. We should thus shift the educational trend to yield tangible practical results in education, producing creative outcomes in the education sector.

Maharakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, under the Office of the Basic Education Commission, is an educational agency driving basic education management to ensure all school-age populations are thoroughly developed according to educational standards, preparing them to step into the ASEAN Community based on Thai identity. The communication of goals and directions within the organization still lacks unity, affecting work motivation. To fully execute this duty, educational personnel, especially school administrators, must possess a broad vision and be capable of coping with continuous change. To manage education effectively, it is essential to develop the creative leadership of school administrators. Qualified leaders are those who can continuously adapt and innovate in line with the vision, including a lack of understanding of the diverse individual talents of personnel, which prevents the development of those specific potentials. Therefore, school administrators must manage the institution with a visionary approach to respond quickly, efficiently, and effectively to the policies of the Educational Service Area Office, achieve objectives, and further improve their work (Maharakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, 2023). Based on the reasons above, the researcher is interested in studying "A Program for Enhancing Creative Leadership for School Administrators under the Maharakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1." This research aims to discover useful components and indicators for the schools to become learning organizations in this era of change. The findings can be used to develop school administrators into those with Creative Leadership who can understand complex problems or opportunities within the organization. The school administrators will then be able to use this knowledge and ability to drive organizational policies toward complete and efficient goals.

## 2. Research Methodology

This research used a mixed methods approach, conducted in two phases as follows:

### 2.1. Phase One

The study of current conditions, desired conditions, and necessarily needs to enhance creative leadership of school administrators under Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.

#### 2.1.1. Population and Sample

The population consisted of 1,404 participants, including school administrators and teachers from the Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.

The sample consisted of 313 participants, including school administrators and teachers from schools under the same area. It was determined using Krejcie & Morgan Formula (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) stratified random sampling categorized by school size; small, medium, and large. Within each stratum, simple random sampling was conducted based on school size to select the sample as specified.

#### 2.1.2. Research Instruments

The questionnaire consisted of 2 sections. Part 1 consisted of general information about educational level, position, and school size, presented as a checklist. Part 2 was a questionnaire concerning the current and desired conditions of creative leadership of school administrators under the Office by using a 5-point rating scale based on Likert's concept.

#### 2.1.3. Instrument Quality Assessment and Data Collection

The criteria and procedures for constructing a rating scale questionnaire were thoroughly examined. Based on this understanding, the research conceptual framework was used as a foundation for drafting the questionnaire items. The drafted questionnaire was submitted to the thesis advisor for a thorough review to identify and rectify any flaws or ambiguities in the question items.

The revised questionnaire was submitted to five experts to assess the content validity using the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) method. The IOC values ranged between 0.60 to 1.00 were acceptable.

The questionnaire was pilot tested to 30 school administrators and teachers, who were a non-sample group. The discrimination values for the current condition ranged from 0.52 to 0.88, and for the desired condition from 0.866 to 0.879. All 40 items met the quality criteria.

The overall reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) were 0.874 for the current condition questionnaire and 0.963 for the desired condition questionnaire, both statistically significant at the .05 level.

Data were collected from 313 sample participants using both in-person distribution and Google Forms.

The Necessary needs assessment was performed by comparing the current and desired conditions. The Priority Needs Index (PNI<sub>modified</sub>) was calculated to identify and rank the priority elements for improvement.

#### 2.1.4. Data Analysis and Statistical Methods Used in the Study

A statistical software package was used to evaluate the quality of the research instruments and to perform data analysis. This included the calculation of the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and the Priority Needs Index Modified (PNI<sub>modified</sub>).

### 2.2. Phase Two

The findings from Phase One were used as empirical input for the design of the creative leadership development program in Phase Two. To develop a program to enhance the creative leadership of school administrators under Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.

#### 2.2.1. Population and Sample

The interview participants were chosen from three school administrators recognized as the best practice examples in creative leadership using a purposive sampling technique.

The suitability and feasibility of the program were assessed by 5 experts. These experts were selected using purposive sampling based on specific qualifications.

#### 2.2.2. Research Instruments

The semi-structured interview was designed to gather information on the enhancement of creative leadership of school administrators under the office.

The interview questions were reviewed for accuracy and appropriateness with an advisor before being used in interviews with administrators. It consisted of 2 sections. Section 1 consisted of general information about the interview. Section 2 consisted of opinions about enhancing creative leadership for school administrators.

The assessment form consisted of two sections. Section 1 was general information about the assessor. Section 2 was the assessment of the suitability and feasibility of the program.

#### 2.2.3. Instrument Quality Assessment and Data Collection

The interviewees recognized as the best practice were selected using the criteria as follows:

1) School administrator with demonstrated achievements in school management, whose school or personnel has received the OBEC Awards from the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) and was awarded the Gold Medal level.

2) School administrator who demonstrated achievements at the educational service area level in creative leadership, whose schools have been recognized by their affiliated agencies or external organizations as model schools or schools with outstanding best practices.

#### 2.2.4. Data Analysis and Statistical Methods Used in the Study

The assessment of suitability and feasibility of the program data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, which included percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

### 3. Ethical Approval

This research application has been reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects, Mahasarakham University, Thailand. (Approval number: 559-437/2025). All participants gave informed consent, and their privacy rights were strictly observed. The data are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding number.

### 4. Research Findings

The researcher conducted the data analysis in two phases.

Phase One: The results of the study on the current conditions, desired conditions, and necessary needs for enhancing creative leadership of school administrators under Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1

The research findings revealed the current conditions, desired conditions, and the necessary needs for enhancing creative leadership of school administrators under the office. The results are presented in Table 1 as follows:

**Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviation, Priority Needs Index Modified (PNI<sub>modified</sub>), and Rank of Priority Needs for enhancing creative leadership of school administrators under the Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.**

Component of creative leadership	Current Conditions			Desired Conditions			PNI <sub>modified</sub>	Priority Ranking
	$\bar{x}$	S. D.	Level	$\bar{x}$	S. D.	Level		
1 .Creativity	2.74	0.05	Moderate	4.60	0.64	Highest	0.675	3
2 .Teamwork	2.79	0.05	Moderate	4.82	0.38	High	0.720	1
3 .Flexibility and Adaptability	2.84	.003	Moderate	4.56	0.70	High	0.606	5
4 .Vision	2.80	.003	Moderate	.452	.067	High	0.614	4
5 .Individualized Differences	2.73	0.10	Moderate	4.58	0.62	High	0.678	2
Total	2.78	0.05	Moderate	4.62	0.60	High		

According to Table 1, the current conditions of creative leadership of school administrators under the office were found to be at a moderate level ( $\bar{x} = 2.78$ ). When considering each component individually, all were also at a moderate level. The creative leadership component with the highest mean score was creative thought Flexibility and adaptation ( $\bar{x} = 2.84$ ), followed by Vision ( $\bar{x} = 2.80$ ), Teamwork ( $\bar{x} = 2.79$ ), Creativity ( $\bar{x} = 2.74$ ) and Individual consideration ( $\bar{x} = 2.73$ ).

The desired conditions of creative leadership of school administrators under the office were found to be at high level ( $\bar{x} = 4.62$ ). When considering each component Imagination, all were also at highest level. The component with the highest mean score Teamwork ( $\bar{x} = 4.82$ ), followed by Creativity ( $\bar{x} = 4.60$ ), Individualized Differences ( $\bar{x} = 4.58$ ), Flexibility and Adaptability ( $\bar{x} = 4.56$ ) and Vision ( $\bar{x} = 4.52$ ).

The Priority Needs Index (PNI<sub>modified</sub>) shows that all components scored above the threshold of 0.3 This indicates that all components require enhancement. The component with the highest level of need is Teamwork (PNI<sub>modified</sub> = 0.720), followed by Individualized Differences (PNI<sub>modified</sub> = 0.678), Creativity (PNI<sub>modified</sub> = 0.675), Vision (PNI<sub>modified</sub> = 0.614), Flexibility and Adaptability (PNI<sub>modified</sub> = 0.606).

This study will be critically discussed using several fundamental ideas and frameworks from the field of educational administration, including systems theory, and creative leadership theory. Robinson (2007) claimed that creative leadership requires the ability to motivate, coordinate, and lead others with imagination, vision, and flexibility through innovative and challenging approaches. It comprises key components such as visionary thinking, consideration of individual differences, and the ability to be flexible and adaptable. Stoll and Temperley (2009) defined creative leadership as an imaginative and thoughtful response to opportunities and challenging issues. It involves seeing, thinking, and acting differently to create opportunities for everyone involved. creative leadership is expressed through a leader's behavior that inspires and motivates organizational personnel by clearly communicating the organization's vision and goals. It involves out-of-the-box thinking and the use of new approaches. This process relies heavily on interpersonal communication and the ability to adapt to change. It fosters collaborative and innovative responses in problem-solving, effectively guiding the organization toward its goals.

From the result, that the current conditions were assessed at moderate level while the desired conditions were assessed at the high level. This indicates that the most critical desirable behavior of creative leadership of school administrators under the office is Imagination. Therefore, school administrators should be careful consider before making any decisions regarding

operations in educational institutions. This includes carefully and rationally considers information to reach appropriate conclusions or decisions, drawing on existing knowledge, understanding, and experience.

Phase Two: To develop and evaluate the program to enhance the creative leadership of school administrators under the Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1

The Priority Needs Index (PNI<sub>modified</sub>) was analyzed from the current and desired conditions of creative leadership. Key components with significant needs were identified across four dimensions. These issues were used to construct an interview protocol, the findings of which were employed in developing the program to enhance the creative leadership of school administrators under the office. The interview was conducted with three key informants, comprising school administrators recognized for their best practices in creative leadership. The results were synthesized and are presented in Table 2 as follows:

Interview Topics	Summary of findings
1. Program Components	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Principles</li> <li>2. Purposes</li> <li>3. Contents</li> <li>4. Development methods</li> <li>5. Measurement and evaluation</li> </ol>
2. Development concept	Learning Based on the 70:20:10 Model. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 70% of learning from practice and experience.</li> <li>2. 20% of learning through study visits, allowing participants to learn from the practices and experiences of others.</li> <li>3. 10% of learning and development through courses and programs, such as participating in seminars and specialized training courses.</li> </ol>
3. Development Methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On-the-Job Learning</li> <li>2. Educational Study Visit</li> <li>3. Training Program</li> </ol>
4. Duration	100 hours
5. Assessment and Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pre-, during-, and post-development evaluation</li> <li>2. Evaluation of Participant Satisfaction with the Program</li> </ol>

Both theoretical foundations in creative leadership and qualitative data gathered via interviews, the program presents a comprehensive approach grounded in established models and best practices. This program serves as a key approach to enhancing the creative leadership of school administrators under the office. It aims to develop administrators within this office to possess knowledge, understanding, and the ability to foster imagination, flexibility, individuality, and vision. The goal is to ensure that operations achieve the set objectives while allowing administrators to fully harness each staff member's potential, which is a crucial factor contributing to the organization's success.

The 70:20:10 framework outlines a model for learning and development, emphasizing that 70% of learning is from practice and experience, 20% from interactions with others, and 10% from learning and development through courses and programs. This model suggests that effective learning and development programs should consider a mix of informal and formal learning opportunities (Lombardo and Eichinger, 1996). This model is designed for effective leadership cultivation by emphasizing experiential learning within a real-world work context rather than traditional classroom settings. A key characteristic of the 70:20:10 framework is the strategic integration of activities in these specific proportions to systematically enhance the learning process across various channels Charles (2013)

The duration of this innovative leadership program is decided during the interview based on the best practices. The duration of training programs varies depending on the training objectives, content complexity, audience needs, and delivery methods (Noe, 2017). Time allocation must be appropriate according to the components with the highest priority needs. Since each module requires different amounts of time, the researcher can allocate 100 hours for this program.

**Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Suitability and Feasibility Level of the Program for Enhancing the creative leadership of school administrators under the Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.**

Program Components	Suitability			Feasibility		
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level
1. Principles						

Program Components	Suitability			Feasibility		
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level
1.1 Importance of Principles	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.40	0.55	High
1.2 Suitability to the problem context	4.80	0.45	Highest	5.00	0.00	Highest
1.3 The Necessity of Development	4.20	0.45	High	4.60	0.55	Highest
<b>.2Objectives</b>						
2.1 The objectives are appropriate.	4.80	0.45	Highest	5.00	0.00	Highest
2.2 The objectives are clear	4.60	0.55	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
<b>.3Content</b>						
3.1 Consistent with the program objectives.	4.20	0.45	High	4.40	0.55	High
3.2 Content and duration	4.60	0.55	Highest	5.00	0.00	Highest
Module 1 Creativity	4.40	0.89	High	4.60	0.55	Highest
Module 2 Teamwork	4.40	0.55	Highest	4.20	0.45	High
Module 3 Flexibility and Adaptability	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
Module 4 Vision	4.20	0.45	High	4.80	0.45	Highest
Module 5 Individualized Differences	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
<b>.4Development methods</b>						
4.1 Self-directed Learning	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
4.2 Study visits	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
4.3 Project Assignment	4.60	0.55	Highest	4.20	0.45	Highest
4.4 Workshop/Seminar	4.40	0.55	High	4.80	0.45	Highest
4.5 Coaching	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
4.5 Training	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
<b>.5Evaluation</b>						
5.1 Pre- development evaluation	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
5.2 During-development evaluation	4.60	0.55	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
5.3 Post-development evaluation	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
Total	4.68	0.37	Highest	4.66	0.43	Highest

According to Table 3, About five experts assessed the creative leadership development program for administrators on an item-by-item basic. The results showed that the suitability of the program received mean scores ranging from 4.20 to 5.00, indicating that the program is highly appropriate. Additionally, the feasibility of the program was rated with mean scores between 4.20 and 5.00, demonstrating that a program is highly feasible for implementation. This is consistent with the study conducted by Pornveenus Waiyakan (2022), developed a program titled “The Development of Programs to Enhance Creative Leadership of School Administrators in the Roi-Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 2.” The study identified key developmental needs—specifically in teamwork, flexibility and adaptability, individualized consideration, creativity, and vision—which resonates with the findings of my own research regarding teamwork. Furthermore, the developed program comprises five core components: 1) Principles, 2) Objectives, 3) Content, 4) Development methods, and 5) Measurement and evaluation. The content is divided into five modules corresponding to the identified needs. The overall program evaluation indicated that both appropriateness and feasibility were at the highest levels. The consistency between these findings and the work of Waiyakan (2022) underscores that teamwork is a fundamental pillar of creative leadership in educational settings. This suggests that for school administrators to foster innovation, they must first prioritize collaborative environments and interpersonal dynamics, as both studies identified this as a primary developmental need.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and the development of the Creative Leadership Development Program, several practical implications for educational authorities and school administrators are identified as follows.

The significant gap between the current moderate level of creative leadership and the desired "highest level" suggests that Mahasarakham Primary Educational Service Area Office 1 should urgently prioritize professional development. Specifically, resources should be allocated to enhance Teamwork and Individual Consideration, as these were identified as the highest priority needs. Rather than general leadership training, the Office should implement the proposed five-module program to ensure a focused and structured approach to competency building.

Since the program has been validated by experts for both suitability and feasibility, school districts can confidently adopt the four core modules—Creativity, Teamwork, Flexibility and Adaptability, Vision, and Individualized Differences—as a blueprint for training. To maximize impact, these modules should not be treated as isolated workshops but integrated into the regular professional development calendar, utilizing the "Mixed methods" approach to balance theoretical knowledge with practical, collaborative problem-solving.

The findings underscore that in a rapidly changing educational landscape, administrators must move beyond traditional management. The emphasis on imagination and adaptability within the program provides a practical toolkit for leaders to navigate uncertainty. Educational authorities should encourage an organizational culture that rewards creative risk-taking and collaborative teamwork, as these are essential for strengthening school performance in modern contexts.

The inclusion of "Measurement and Evaluation" as a core component of the program implies that leadership development should be data driven. The Office should establish a monitoring system to assess how the implementation of these creative leadership traits translates into tangible student outcomes and school efficiency. This ensures that the investment in leadership training yields sustainable improvements in the quality of education.

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